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INSIDE TODAY

WORLD NEWS

AFGHAN VOTE

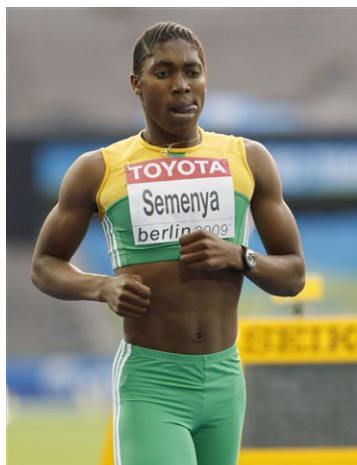


Afghan President and incumbent in presidential elections Hamid Karzai speaks to the media during Independence Day celebrations at the Defence Ministry compound in Kabul, Wednesday, Aug. 19, 2009. Afghans will go to the polls to vote for a new president Thursday.

See International News on
Page B8

SPORTS NEWS

GENDER BENDER



In this Monday Aug. 17, 2009 file photo South Africa's Caster Semenya pauses after competing in a Women's 800m semifinal at the World Athletics Championships in Berlin. The IAAF has asked the South African track federation to conduct a gender verification test on 800 meter runner Caster Semenya amid concerns she does not meet the requirements to compete as a woman.

See Sports Today on Page B10

The Palm Beach Plaza Hosts it first tenants' meeting



PALM BEACH – The Palm Beach Plaza hosted its first tenant meeting recently.

It gave developers great pleasure to see sixty-six new businesses emerging and coming together to create a truly exciting new mall, hailed as Aruba's #2 attraction – having reserved the #1

attraction title to the island's beaches!

The tenants got together on the third, Fun City, floor of the plaza and over delicious coffee and donuts received the latest updates from the management team regarding the plaza's opening schedule, its marketing plans and its

interior design timetable.

The complex, the largest of its kind in the Southern Caribbean, was created as an all-day family entertainment center offering an abundance of activities to visitors and locals of all ages.

Mall Manager Alex Otterspeer welcomed business-representatives from Shivas Gold & Gems, Tommy Hilfiger, Façonnable, Benetton, San Marina Shoes, Nautica, Sunspecs, Skechers Apparel, Royal Diamonds & Jewels, Monarch Jewels, Guess, Guess Kids, Perry Ellis, Addict, Penha Perfumeries, the Shoe Box, La Chinata, Bianco e Bianco linen, Rimowa Luggage, Muaa fashions, Footfit footwear & Vanilla

clothing, Giordano, Basinger Concept Store, Art Fusion gifts, Pixies Bijoux, Candyland Sweets, Tropical World Souvenirs, Panache Swim & Surf Wear, Lulu Body & Bath Products, an 8 movie-theater Mega Plex, and Aruba's first food court operators including Churromania, Chubby Panda Chinese, Sciue Sciue Italian Tapas, Delie International Sandwiches, Mc Shawarma Express, Italian Gelato and a children's entertainment section operating a Kiddie-Train, a Rock Climbing wall, the Palm Beach Dream Bowl Bowling Alley, an electronic game zone and a thrilling Cable Slide, next to an indoor supervised play room.

Continued on Page 10

Swedish Press Trip enjoys Radisson Hospitality



PALM BEACH – Five top journalists from Sweden graced the island with their presence this week. Magda Gadd, QX magazine, Emma Linden, Golfresan Magazine, Nadya Fridman & Leif Hansen, First Class Concierge Magazine and Oystein Gravdal, Kapital Reise Magazine were joined by the Aruba Tourism Authority Representative in Scandinavia Kevin Jansen, and escorted while here by the Aruba Tourism Authority Representative Mandy López.

Having arrived here on the Martinair flight from Amsterdam the dignitaries stayed at Divi Village for three days and then relocated to the Radisson Aruba Resort Casino & Spa for the balance of their stay.

Their favorite portion of the Aruba trip? They all agreed that their visit to Larimar spa was the highlight of their island stay.

They are pictured here in the lobby of the resort upon departure, with Lily Polsbroek Senior Sales Manager. □



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At the upcoming Caribbean Sea Jazz Festival

Cosy Cotton blues band features fantastic Grana Louise from the US



ORANJESTAD - The four members of the Cosy Cotton blues band are more than a little happy: they are ecstatic!

And this because internationally acclaimed singer, songwriter and music producer Grana Louise will be belting out her songs together with them. Alexander van Merten (drums), Boudy Loogman (bass guitar) and Bert Devies (guitar) are the original members of the 1980's band, which used to feature singer Wendy

Sheridan. Now, more than 25 years later three of the band's musicians have gotten together for a blues revival show in Holland and the bug bit again! Together with Hammond organ and piano player Joeke Dietrich they form once again the Cosy Cotton blues band.

Rave reviews accompany the performances of the group, which takes its audience on a musical trip through the southern states of America, culminating in the cotton fields of Louisiana.

The story of Cosy Cotton goes back to 1986 when the band played at blues and jazz festivals, first as a warm-up act, but later playing with big names like BB King, Ray Charles, Robert Cray, the Blues Brothers and Chaka Kahn. The CD that was recorded was huge success as well. But in 1993 the members of Cosy Cotton decided to venture out into the real world, starting businesses of their own and the band broke up.

Last year, however, Bert, Boudy and Alexander got together again and the magic was back full blast to



the joy of the former group's faithful fans. Together with fantastic singer Grana Louise and her powerful, awesome voice Cosy

Cotton is sure to soar once more. The Caribbean Sea Jazz Festival on Aruba will be the group's international debut. □





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Marlin 'cautiously optimistic' after meeting with Bijleveld

~ Says The Hague can't take over tasks ~

THE HAGUE--Commissioner of Constitutional Affairs William Marlin met with Dutch State Secretary of Kingdom Relations Ank Bijleveld-Schouten on Monday to discuss the concerns in The Hague about St. Maarten's capability to become an autonomous country in the Kingdom. They also talked about the possibilities of assistance by the Dutch to help St. Maarten get ready for country status. Marlin was cautiously optimistic. "We'll get there," he said.

Marlin updated Bijleveld-Schouten on the preparations that need to take place to ensure that St. Maarten is ready when the date for the island to attain country status comes around. "We discussed the Dutch concerns, especially in the Second Chamber, and exchanged views on the different approaches to how to deal with these concerns," said Marlin in an interview with The Daily Herald Monday night.

The different approaches will be negotiated further in the technical work groups in preparation for the next Political Steering Group meeting in late September. At that meeting, parties should sign off on an agreement that will pave the way for St. Maarten to attain country status and will contain sufficient guarantees for the Dutch cabinet and the Second Chamber, said Marlin.

Bijleveld-Schouten and Marlin spoke about possible assistance by the Dutch Government in light of the guarantees the Netherlands wants. According to Marlin, Dutch assistance should come automatically

when St. Maarten asks for help. However, the responsibility will remain in the hands of St. Maarten and at no time can the Netherlands simply decide to take over responsibilities.

Marlin compared it to taking a sick child to the hospital. Parents call in the help of a doctor who temporarily takes care of the child to make sure that it gets well. But the parents remain responsible for the child.

"We need to have a good organisation, but if we don't manage to realise everything in time, the Netherlands cannot say that it will take over. We have to look at how we can improve things together," he said.

Marlin said he understood the concerns in The Hague, but that under no circumstance could the Netherlands decide unilaterally that it would take over responsibilities because St. Maarten wasn't ready.

St. Maarten is also securing the assistance of the Central Government and the island territory Curaçao to help build up services in St. Maarten to make sure services will be rendered to the people. On St. Maarten's request, Curaçao will render services, via a sort of service level contract.

Meetings will take place in Curaçao next week to further secure this cooperation. In this case too, the responsibility will remain in the hands of St. Maarten, said Marlin. He is returning to St. Maarten today, Tuesday.

Financial issues

While in the Netherlands, Marlin and his colleague, Finance Commissioner Xavier Blackman, also met

with College for Financial Supervision CFT Chairman Hans Weitenberg and board member Alberto Romero to discuss St. Maarten's financial situation.

Parties discussed the effects of the worldwide financial crisis on St. Maarten government's finances. The island expects further deficits in 2010. The expected financial setback comes at a time when St. Maarten needs to build up its apparatus in preparation for country status.

Marlin and Blackman also talked with CFT about the fact that St. Maarten still isn't receiving financial support as part of the agreed-on debt reorganisation. The island has a backlog in payments of some NAf. 183 million, but the Netherlands has not paid bills because invoices haven't reached the Netherlands yet for approval, as they are still stuck in Curaçao.

In the meantime, St. Maarten has had to pay off a large chunk to creditors. St. Maarten owes the Antillean pension fund APNA some NAf. 65 million and has to pay about NAf. 12,000 per day in interest. Marlin said Weitenberg showed understanding for St. Maarten's situation.

In the Netherlands Marlin further met with officials of communication management and public affairs bureau Pauw Sanders Zeilstra Van Spaendonck PSZVS on how to proceed with the preparations for the "St. Maarten House," which should open next month. Marlin met with two lawyers of St. Maarten descent who are interested in helping out at the St. Maarten House.



Marlin also met with officials of St. Maarten's Student Support Services S4 and Minister Plenipotentiary in The Hague Mavis Brooks-Salmon. Blackman spoke with candidates for the organisation of country St. Maarten. (Suzanne Koelega) □



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Int'l School of Aruba opens gates for new year



WAYACA - The International School of Aruba opened its gates for the 2009-2010 school year on Wednesday,

August 12. New students and new staff joined all those returning to participate in the most comprehensive

educational program on the island of Aruba. ISA is fully staffed and will continue to offer unique opportunities that



are designed to help students prepare for post high school education in colleges and universities around the world. For more information about ISA, the website (isaruba.com) provides a look at

programs and people that drive the school. Calling ISA (583 5040) or stopping by the Wayaca campus are other ways to learn more about this challenging student-centered educational institution. □



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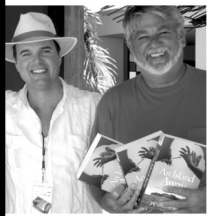
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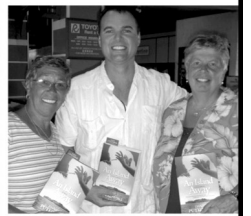
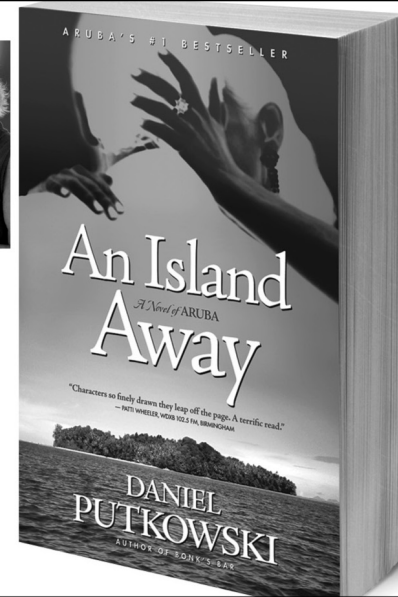
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Bill reaches major hurricane status

PHILIPSBURG--Interests in the Northeast Caribbean have been advised to monitor the progress of Hurricane Bill, because while it is expected to pass well to the Northeast of the islands Wednesday night and poses no immediate threat to St. Maarten, Statia and Saba, according to the Meteorological Service of the Netherlands Antilles, its strength and sheer size mean that any Southward shift in the forecast track could have serious implications for the local area.

The local weather report yesterday evening mentioned that Bill was already impeding shower activity across the region. Sea conditions will gradually deteriorate as the system approaches, bringing large Northeast swells.

The centre of Hurricane Bill was located by an Air Force Reserve hurricane hunter aircraft at 11:00pm yesterday near latitude 17.2 North and longitude 53.4 West, or about 555 miles (895 km) East of the Northeastern Caribbean.

Bill was moving toward the West-Northwest near 15mph (24km/hr). A West-Northwest motion was expected to continue overnight, followed by a turn toward the Northwest today. On this track the core of Bill will be passing well to the Northeast of the Northeastern Caribbean islands late Wednesday and early Thursday.

Maximum sustained winds were near 125mph (205km/hr) with higher gusts, making Bill a Category Three hurricane on the Saffir-Simpson scale, and some additional strengthening was considered possible during the next day or two.

Hurricane force winds extended outward up to 45 miles (75km) from the centre and tropical storm force up to 175 miles (280km). The minimum central pressure reported by reconnaissance aircraft was 952mb (28.11 inches).

Meanwhile, disorganised showers and thunderstorms extending from near Jamaica across Eastern Cuba to the central Bahamas were associated with the remnants of Tropical Depression Ana and an upper-level low-pressure area. This activity was moving West at 20-25mph and spreading across the remainder of Cuba, and the Bahamas and South Florida during the next day or so.

This system showed no signs of regeneration and there was a less than 30 per cent chance of this system becoming a tropical cyclone again during the next 24 hours. □

Stakeholders briefed on labour market-oriented education

PHILIPSBURG - Stakeholders in education were updated on the process being embarked upon to streamline education to meet the needs of the labour market during the "Start Conference" held on August 12 and 13.

The Labour Market Oriented Education Programme (LMOE) is being developed for St. Maarten Vocational Training School (SMVTS). The conference was organized by SMVTS in collaboration with the Department of Educational Research Policy and Innovations (DERPI); the Insular Department of Education; Dutch Funding Agency USONA; and Curaçao Innovations Bureau FIDE.

"The main objective of the start conference was to apprise every stakeholder of the developments regarding the Labour Market Oriented Education (LMOE). In essence this programme is a very practical programme that targets a specific group of students. This group of students will receive a hands-on education in small groups geared at preparing them for immediate entrance to the labour market," DERPI said in a press release on Tuesday.

"The structure, procedures, and methods used in this

programme are different to those used at a traditional Preparatory Secondary Vocational Education (PSVE) and, as such, additional information was needed for the school. How these two educational programmes will interact at SMVTS was also a point of discussion during the conference." An evaluation of the conference has shown that the start conference was in general well received by the staff of SMVTS. Staff members said they left the conference with new information and a will to work on the implementation of this new educational programme.

The start conference was the first step in tackling the

challenge of gaining proper accreditation for SMVTS, DERPI said. In the future, the school will be working on both the LMOE and PSVE programmes to be implemented at the school, seeking temporary status, and working out other challenges on the educational, organizational, and infrastructural front.

"SMVTS is not the only one with work ahead; the Island Government also has some work to do in order to adequately usher in this new educational system for SMVTS. A collaboration of efforts from the school itself, DERPI and FIDE, Curaçao will be necessary to bring these future plans to realization," said DERPI □

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On August 23

ALNO Beach Tennis Tournament is at Eagle Beach



EAGLE BEACH - It's time to pick up your paddle racquets again, you Beach Tennis lovers! On Sunday, August 23 the lazy days of the summer holiday are definitely over. It is high time to get in shape and toned and Beach Tennis is the perfect and fun way to

do it.

The tournament is held at Eagle Beach, across from former Le Dôme Restaurant, and a DJ, a BBQ grill, a fruit bar and lots of ice cold drinks will take care of you. The ALNO Beach Tennis Tournament is a great test for local beach



tennis heroes Cado de Vreede and Dennis Schoneveld, who are practicing hard for the World Cup, held in New York in September, for the US Beach Tennis Open as well as for the Bermuda Open. They are Aruba's premier Beach Tennis Ambassadors. Half-way through the 2009 national ranking, the standings are as follows:

Pro Men: 1. Dennis Schoneveld
Pro Women: 1. Marieke Buuts
Advanced Men: 1. Edwin Hekman
Advanced Women: 1. Marloes Kleys
Advanced Mixed: 1. Rixt Kramer/José Marin
Intermediate Men: 1. Rick van Dijk/Jasper Brouwer
Fun Men: 1. Benjamin Kloes

Fun Women: 1. Monique in 't Veld

Register now for the upcoming Beach Tennis Ranking via www.arubabeachtennis.com or call Jochem Ros or Sjoerd de Vries at 592-6421/5837074.

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PALM BEACH - Taste of Belgium's Bistro is located in the intimate courtyard of the Paseo Herencia Mall across from the Holiday Inn Resort. It is cozy and casual: one can have a drink with friends, have a quick bite before grabbing a movie or relax and lounge away the afternoon and evening in the balmy breeze underneath the stars. The Bistro's great selection of Belgian beers has drawn many beer lovers to the mall already, but it is its exquisite food, ample portions and great prices that keep folks coming back for more every night of the week.

The Bistro's menu offers everyone's favorites, but with a culinary Belgian twist. This might be an unusual

presentation, an awesome side dish, a stunning combination, a surprising regional dish or a dessert that takes you to heaven and back a few times. Good service and lots of smiles will surely make the Bistro one of your favorite places to go to. Open for coffee, lunch, drinks, dinner and cocktails.

Early Bird

When the rays of the sun start fading and the shadows grow a bit longer, many choose for an exceptionally good option for dinner: the Early Bird Special! The restaurant's sundown, 3-course menu is spectacular and its price can't be beat for \$ 25.00.

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PALM BEACH - The health and calorie conscious among us need fear steakhouses no more. Whether it's a low-carb, low-fat, or even vegetarian diet you follow, Texas de Brazil Churrascaria fits into just about every dieter's menu plan.

Low carb eaters will have all their expectations surpassed with a tempting carnivorous selection of umpteen cuts of sizzling beef, pork, lamb, sausage, and poultry. The meats are prepared in the healthiest style of cooking—slow roasting—where much of the fat drips off in the roasting process, so those looking for a lower fat option to sautéing, pan frying, or deep frying will also be able to indulge.

The Brazilian-style steakhouse also offers up a garden full of healthy eats on a lavish 40-item seasonal salad bar, giving dieters plenty to choose from to accompany the

slow-roasted meats. A selection of fresh lettuces and vegetables may be standard for most salad bars, but Texas de Brazil's version goes a gourmet twist further, treating the palate to additional items like marinated portabella mushrooms, sweet roasted bell peppers, hearts of palm, sundried tomatoes, imported cheeses—including fresh buffalo mozzarella—sushi, home-made soups, and much more.

The salad bar is included in the continuous service meal with unlimited choices from the grilled meats, but for vegetarians or the non-meat eaters, a special price is offered for just the salad bar. Of course, for those looking to splurge while on vacation, Texas de Brazil will gladly serve their garlic mashed potatoes, traditional fried plantains, and their world-famous parmesan cheese bread as part of the meal.

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The Westin Resort, Aruba splashes onto De Palm Island



BALASHI – This past Friday, it was an extra special day for employees of The Westin Resort, Aruba. The resort's annual Family Day was held on De Palm Island, which accommodated nearly 700 Westin associates and their guests. Each year, this event is held to bring



everyone together to enjoy a relaxing day of fun in the sun. At De Palm Island, a bevy of activities were available for all ages, including amazing snorkeling with the island's brilliant blue parrot fish, beach volleyball, an all-you-can-eat buffet, open bar, great music



provided by the associate's own "Westin All-star Band," and the super splashy water playground. □



Head downtown to Casa Tua Barcelona for Lunch and Dinner



ORANJESTAD - The downtown atmosphere is cool and relaxed with its in- and outside seating. The highlight at Casa Tua Barcelona is new lunch specials every weekday from Monday till Friday! A \$9.95 lunch special; Beef tenderloin with a red wine sauce or choose the Grouper Fillet for \$11.95. Both dishes include a soft drink. Fresh Fish lovers can treat the palate to the Whole Red Snapper, served with Rice and a salad for \$19.95.

For entertainment Casa Tua Barcelona offers a Live Flamenco Show on Friday Nights while you can dance on the rhythms of salsa & bolero performed by a live band on Saturday Nights! All days of the week we serve Cold and Hot tapas as appetizers or the delicious Iberian Ham Pata Negra which we import directly from Andalucía. As your main course you could choose our Paella, traditionally prepared on the spot by our chef! Combine this Spanish dish with our home-made sangria to complete your dinner.

Of course we saved the best for last as no one does an ending better than Casa Tua with their dreamy Tiramisu. If you're into something different we suggest tasting the Espresso Martini Cocktail as dessert, you won't be disappointed.

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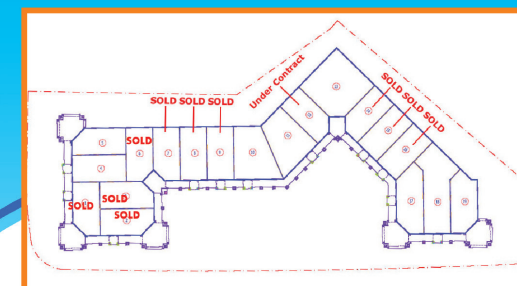
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The Palm Beach Plaza Hosts it first tenants' meeting



Continued from Front Page

The mall will also feature a branch of Western Union, the Post-Office, the Green Door Spa and a Mini-Market, in addition to a number of theme-restaurants and bars including Casa Tua Mediterranean, Havana Cigar & Spirit Bar, Kokomos, Hoshi Sushi and Mama Mexico, Mimo's Ice Cream, Tio Pepe Juice Bar and Sir James House of Coffee set amid tropical vegetation, with 354 easily accessible, ground level parking spaces, and nicely lit walking lanes to and from the hotel strip. □





By: Dr Carlos Viana

In the best of all worlds the preparation for the birth of your child would start many years in advance in detoxifying your body from toxic heavy metals, and fat soluble toxins from insecticides, pesticides and the countless petroleum based chemicals. In our clinic we have more than three thousand hair test, that show the body burden of toxic heavy metals that have crossed the placenta into the growing baby.

If you plan to have children some day, here's important information for a healthier baby. Avoid alcohol and other drugs, including pharmaceuticals except under medical care. Cigarette smoking and secondhand smoke during pregnancy cause a higher risk of having babies of lower birth weight. This can cause a host of health problems for the baby, such as cerebral palsy or learning disabilities. Women who actively smoke during pregnancy expose their developing baby to passive smoke; the chemicals pass through the placenta and put the baby at risk of lower birth weight. An infant who was exposed to secondhand smoke as a developing fetus may be at increased risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). Post-birth exposure to secondhand smoke from the mother, father or others in the household also increases the risk of SIDS. Secondhand smoke may cause asthma in children. In children who already have asthma, secondhand smoke can make episodes more frequent and more severe. Secondhand smoke is also tied to infections of the lower respiratory tract, such

Natural Pregnancy

as bronchitis and pneumonia, especially in those younger than 6. It's also associated with irritation of the upper respiratory tract and a small reduction in lung function. Children living in households with smokers are more likely to develop ear infections. Nutrition is an important part of a healthy pregnancy and baby. You will want to eat the freshest possible organic foods that are beneficial according to your blood type. Additionally, supplementation with lectin which has been shown to enhance the brain development of your baby; women, who take lecithin supplements while pregnant and breastfeeding, have been shown to have babies with larger brains that exhibit faster cognitive development.

B – Complex vitamins are essential. Women who are or may become pregnant should be supplementing with the following vitamins. Folic acid is a water-soluble vitamin belonging to the B-complex group of vitamins. These vitamins help the body break down complex carbohydrates into simple sugars to be used for energy. Excess B vitamins are excreted from the body rather than stored for later use. Birth control pills stimulate more of these vitamins to be lost. This is one reason why sufficient daily intake of folic acid is necessary. Always be sure to check with a clinical nutritionist for proper usage of any supplement is you are pregnant.

The second is to prevent neural tube defects in your baby. The two major neural tube birth defects reduced by adequate folic acid intake are anencephaly

and spina bifida. Babies with anencephaly do not develop a brain and are stillborn or die shortly after birth. Those with spina bifida have a defect of the spinal column that can result in varying degrees of handicap, from mild and hardly noticeable cases of scoliosis, a sideways bending of the spine, to paralysis and bladder or bowel incontinence. With medical treatment, most babies born with spina bifida can survive to adulthood. But they may require leg braces, crutches, and other devices to help them walk, and they may have learning disabilities. About 30 percent have slight to severe mental retardation. Enough pregnant women become anemic during their pregnancy that doctors often prescribe iron supplements. Most maternal supplements may contain 30 mg or more of iron per dose, in combination with vitamins or other minerals. While it is true that iron is a basic requirement for the survival and growth of cells of all types, including bacteria, parasites, and cancer, as a certified clinical nutritionist, supplementing with iron concerns me. Accidental iron overdose is a leading cause of poisoning deaths in children under 6 in the United States. Some researchers are even stating that iron added to cereals may be contributing to the incidence of leukemia and cancers of the lymphatic tissues in children.

Additionally, many women cannot stomach these maternal supplements, especially when burdened with morning sickness. The idea that women need extra iron is a mistake.

Doctors generally don't realize that only a few milligrams of iron are lost each day in menstruation. The real issue is that you can hardly avoid getting iron, even when you try. Women absorb iron much more efficiently than men do. From a similar meal, women will normally absorb three times as much iron as men do.

Iron is a potentially toxic heavy metal. In excess, it can cause cancer, heart disease, and other illnesses. In the 1960s the World Health Organization found that when iron supplements were given to anemic people in Africa, there was a great increase in the death rate from infectious diseases. In our clinic we use results from blood chemistry analysis and hair tests to check for toxic heavy metals, including mercury and other elements found in dental amalgams, pesticides and many of the 300+ chemicals we live with daily, all of these can contribute to the health of your unborn child.

Biocompatible dentistry is one way we use to eliminate some of these dangerous toxins; however it is not advisable to have dental work done while pregnant. Even a simple procedure like the annual teeth hygiene cleaning has been shown to release mercury from amalgam fillings.

There are several acupuncture points that are contraindicated, called "forbidden points" during pregnancy that every trained acupuncturist knows well. Yet, many problems encountered during pregnancy including "morning sickness", especially that lasts all day, overly active babies, low back pain, high blood pressure during pregnancy all show positive effects with acupuncture treatments. Other



safe, natural solutions are available for an unexpected cold, flu, stress or mild allergy attack.

Get The Point! A healthy pregnancy has a much better chance of producing healthy children. If we invest as much time in preparing our health as we spend getting the house ready for the newborn, we will have healthier children. With a little medical and nutritional guidance your pregnancy can be a naturally joyous event. NEW HOURS: Mon. afternoons at Rejuvenate Medi-Spa, 5 min. from the hotels! Call for appointment. Dr. Viana will present information on Fertility, Natural Pregnancy and childbirth Friday, Aug. 21 at ATIA building 5 – 9 pm. All are welcome.

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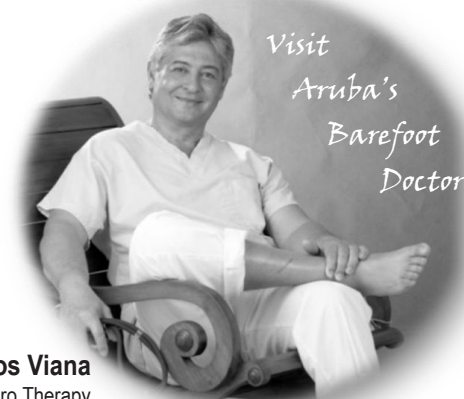
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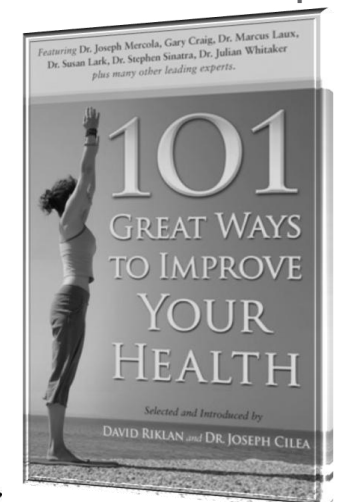
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BUSINESS

Aruba TODAY



The euro turned firmer against the dollar as nervousness over the economic outlook was eased by a supportive US energy report which suggested demand was better than expected.

(AFP/File/Bertrand Langlois)

Euro firmer after strong US energy report

LONDON (AFP) – The euro turned firmer against the dollar as nervousness over the economic outlook was eased by a supportive US energy report which suggested demand was better than expected.

Dealers said risk aversion remains strong and was clearly in evidence over the past few days as a mixed set of data, especially US consumer confidence figures, prompted a flight to the safety of the dollar.

A much larger-than-expected in US energy stocks, however, pointed to growing demand in the US economy, the world's largest, reassuring investors nervous at the possibility that the green shoots of recovery might wither.

In late London trade, the euro was at 1.4243 dollars, up from 1.4102 dollars earlier and from 1.4132 dollars in New York late on Tuesday.

The dollar also fell to 93.83 yen from 94.70 yen late Tuesday.

The early weakness in the euro reflected further heavy losses on the Chinese stock market where investors are worried Beijing may rein in some of its massive economic stimulus programme.

If it does, the knock-on effect in Asia, where Japan has just come out of recession, could be serious, perhaps dampening world demand too.

"The foreign exchange market is being influenced by global share prices, particularly the Shanghai market," said Yosuke Hosokawa, head of foreign exchange at Chuo Mitsui Trust Bank.

"Prospects for the global economy are still uncertain," he noted.

Chinese shares tumbled 4.30 percent on Wednesday.

Stuart Bennett at Calyon said the volatile trade of the past few days suggests the markets do not really know which direction to take, with players waiting for a clearer fix on the economy.

"It's almost certain that the global economy is through the worst phase," Hosokawa said. "Now we are at the next stage, where we will see a zigzag trend for the time being before reaching a full recovery."

In London on Wednesday, the euro was changing hands at 1.4243 dollars against 1.4132 dollars late on Tuesday, at 133.64 yen (133.85), 0.8614 pounds (0.8533) and 1.5165 Swiss francs (1.5200). □

Stocks turn higher on jump in energy demand

By SARA LEPRO,
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK – The stock market shook off early losses Wednesday and turned higher, led by a surge in energy stocks amid signs that demand for oil may be rising.

News from the government that the nation's oil inventory fell by more than 8 million barrels in the past week sent the price of crude and then stocks higher as investors bet that the drop in energy stockpiles is an indication of an improving economy.

The Dow Jones industrial average, down as much as 86 points on economic concerns before the oil report, was up more than 75 in afternoon trading. The other big market indexes also turned higher.

Trading has been erratic all week as the market seesawed between worries about consumer spending and signs that the global economy, while still weak, is showing improvement. On Wednesday, the concerns earlier in the day were fed by a big drop in China's biggest stock market.

The surprising decline in crude inventories was a reassuring sign, but there is still plenty of caution among investors. Although stocks recovered, Treasury prices held on to most of their gains. Treasuries are a safe-haven investment in a struggling economy.

Analysts also said Wall Street's gains were magnified by short-covering, in which investors have to buy stock after having earlier sold borrowed shares in a bet they would fall. That rush to cover ill-timed bets can quicken the market's climb.

"People were watching that 990 level and the fact that we didn't pull back from that, they decided to cover their



The sign of the New York Stock Exchange is seen on a door June 23, 2009.

shorts," said Robert Pavlik, chief market strategist at Banyan Partners, referring to the 990 level on the S&P 500, which the index has had trouble breaking through this week. "So many people focus on the technicals."

In late afternoon trading, the Dow Jones industrials rose 44.89, or 0.5 percent, to 9,262.83. The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 4.43, or 0.5 percent, to 994.10, while the Nasdaq composite index rose 7.61, or 0.4 percent, to 1,963.53.

About eight stocks rose for every seven that fell on the New York Stock Exchange, where volume came to a light 684.7 million shares.

Bond prices rose as investors were drawn to the safety of government debt. The yield on the benchmark 10-year Treasury note, which moves opposite its price, fell to 3.46 percent from 3.52 percent late Tuesday. It was trading at about 3.44 percent before the oil report. Light, sweet crude jumped \$3.23 to settle at \$72.42 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

In other trading, the Russell 2000 index of smaller companies rose 4.32, or 0.8 percent, to 560.75.

REUTERS/Eric Thayer

Analysts say the financial markets are likely to bounce around in the coming weeks as investors try to reconcile their hopes for an economic recovery with the reality that it might not come as fast or be as strong as many people expected.

"Volatility is creeping up," said Brian Nick, investment strategist at Barclays Wealth. "For awhile we were seeing volatility steadily declining and maybe we thought we were completely out of the woods when we were not completely out of the woods." And with many traders on vacation, volume is expected to remain light through at least the end of the month. Thin trading volume can exaggerate the market's movements.

In earnings news Wednesday, BJ's Wholesale Club Inc. said its second-quarter profit dipped 4 percent and sales declined because of falling gasoline prices. Still, the warehouse-club's results beat analysts' estimates and it raised its full-year profit outlook.

Deere & Co., the world's largest maker of farm equipment, reported a 27 percent drop in its fiscal third-quarter profit, but also did better than Wall Street expected. □

Don Hewitt, who invented '60 Minutes,' dies at 86



In this 1992 photo released by CBS, '60 Minutes' producer Don Hewitt, left, speaks with Democratic presidential candidate Arkansas Gov. Bill Clinton and his wife Hillary Rodham Clinton, after lights fell during an interview with the couple. Hewitt, 86, the newsman who invented '60 Minutes' and produced the popular newsmagazine for 36 years, died, according to CBS.

(AP Photo/CBS Photo Archive)

By DAVID BAUDER,
AP Television Writer

NEW YORK — Don Hewitt, a TV news pioneer who created "60 Minutes" and produced the popular CBS newsmagazine for 36 years, died Wednesday. He was 86.

He died of pancreatic cancer at his Bridgehampton home, CBS said. His death came a month after that of fellow CBS legend Walter Cronkite.

Hewitt joined CBS News in television's infancy in 1948, and produced the first televised presidential debate in 1960.

His lasting legacy took shape in the late 1960s when CBS agreed to try his idea of a one-hour broadcast that mixed hard news and feature stories. The television newsmagazine was born on Sept. 24, 1968, when the "60 Minutes" stopwatch began ticking.

He dreamed of a television version of Life, the dominant magazine of the mid-20th century, where interviews with entertainers could co-exist with investigations that exposed corporate malfeasance.

"The formula is simple," he wrote in a memoir in 2001, "and it's reduced to four words every kid in the world knows: Tell me a story. It's that easy."

Hard-driven reporter Mike Wallace, Hewitt's first hire, became the journalist those in power did not want on their doorsteps. Harry Reasoner, Morley Safer, Ed Bradley, Steve Kroft and Diane Sawyer were among others who also reported for the show.

"60 Minutes" won 73 Emmys, 13 DuPont/Columbia University

Awards and nine Peabody Awards during Hewitt's stewardship, which ended in 2004.

It was television journalism's best show ever, said CBS Corp. chief executive Leslie Moonves. "To me, the creation of '60 Minutes' was truly genius," he said.

As a television executive, Moonves could take comfort in scheduling a Sunday evening fixture that finished among Nielsen's top 10 for 23 straight years. It was television's top-rated show four times, most recently in 1992-93, while no longer a regular in the top 10 in Hewitt's later years, it was still TV's most popular newsmagazine.

Infectiously enthusiastic, Hewitt would pepper Moonves with ideas about both news and entertainment. He often joked that out of 100, about 95 would end up in the wastebasket. But some were inspired.

Hewitt treated every new story with the excitement of a cub reporter, said Sawyer, now at ABC News. He once forced her to crawl under a table and out of the room at a fancy dinner party to deliver a scoop — on radio at midnight, she said.

Hewitt often said the accepted wisdom for television news writers before "60 Minutes" was to put words to pictures. He believed that was backward.

"Had he not been a television news producer, I think he would have been a circus ringmaster," CBS News "Face the Nation" host Bob Schieffer said. "Just this great showman. Don Hewitt understood that to tell the news,

to get people to understand what they need to know about, you have to get them into the tent."

He recalled Hewitt saying how "60 Minute" tip-toes to the edge between news and show business, "and I know right were that edge is."

"You hear a lot of stories about him being flamboyant and being a showman, but he really was a great news editor, first and foremost," said Jeff Fager, current "60 Minutes" executive producer. "He always had the ability to make a story better." "I learned everything from him," Fager said.

Fager keeps in his office a framed memo that Hewitt sent out to the staff in 1990 that, at the time, scared Fager to death: "Nowhere in all of journalism are their newspeople as well paid and loudly applauded as you are," the memo said. "Come on ... start turning out stories!"

Upon the start of "60 Minutes," Hewitt recalled that news executive Bill Leonard told him to "make us proud."

"Which may well be the last time anyone ever said 'make us proud' to anyone else in television," he wrote in his memoir. "Because Leonard said 'make us proud' and not 'make us money,' we were able to do both, which I think makes us unique in the annals of television."

As executive producer, Hewitt was responsible for deciding each week which stories would make it on the air. Correspondents and producers alike would wait nervously in screening rooms for his verdict on their work. Hewitt and Wallace would have legendary screaming matches, yet stayed together like a long-married couple.

During his tenure, "60 Minutes" was often a place where people came to make news. Presidential candidate Bill Clinton addressed questions of infidelity in 1992, and Al Gore used the show to announce he wouldn't run for president in 2004.

Hewitt often said he was proud of his show's ability to exonerate innocent people through investigations, such as when a Texas man sent to jail for life for robbery was freed after Safer discredited the evidence against him.

When "60 Minutes" showed a tape of Dr. Jack Kevorkian lethally injecting a patient in 1998, it ignited a debate on

euthanasia and the proper role of a TV news show.

Hewitt was the subject of an unflattering portrait in the 1999 movie "The Insider," which depicted him caving to pressure from CBS lawyers and not airing a whistleblowing report about the tobacco industry. The full report eventually aired.

Although bitter at the former "60 Minutes" producer who became a hero of "The Insider" for fighting to air the story, Hewitt later said he wasn't proud of his actions.

Among his other jobs, Hewitt directed the first network television newscast on May 3, 1948. He originated the use of cue cards for news readers, now done by electronic machines. He was the first to "superimpose" words on the TV screen for a news show.

"Most people think about Don as the creator of '60 Minutes,' in fact he was one of the inventors of broadcast journalism," Kroft said. "There isn't a news show on television that doesn't have Don Hewitt's DNA in it."

Donald Shepard Hewitt was born in New York on Dec. 14, 1922, and grew up in the suburb of New Rochelle. He dropped out of New York University to become a copy boy at the New York Herald Tribune. He joined the Merchant Marines during World War II and worked as a correspondent posted to Gen. Dwight Eisenhower's London headquarters.

After the war and a few brief journalism jobs, he took a job as an associate director at CBS News in 1948.

Before the 1960 presidential

debate, Hewitt asked John F. Kennedy if he wanted makeup. Tanned and fit, Kennedy said no. Richard Nixon followed his lead. Big mistake.

"As every student of politics knows, that debate — like a Miss America contest — turned on who made the better appearance, not with what he said but with how he looked," Hewitt recalled later. "Kennedy won hands down."

Hewitt had said he wanted to "die at my desk," creating a delicate situation for CBS. The show's ratings were declining and it had the oldest audience in television, as well as some of the oldest correspondents.

Hewitt, then 80, was persuaded to announce in January 2003 that he would step down at the conclusion of the 2003-2004 season, which he did. In return, CBS gave him a contract that would pay him through age 90 and a corner office. He'd occasionally wander down to tell Fager what he did or didn't like about that week's episode.

He couldn't retire completely. In 2007, he produced a televised version of the "Radio City Christmas Spectacular," bringing the venerable show to a national TV audience for the first time — on NBC.

Hewitt is survived by his wife of 30 years, journalist Marilyn Berger, two sons from his first marriage and two daughters from his second marriage. Berger, who worked for The New York Times, The Washington Post and NBC, was his third wife.

The funeral will be private. CBS will devote "60 Minutes" this weekend to Hewitt. □



Former CBS news producer and "60 Minutes" creator Don Hewitt is seen here with journalists Harry Reasoner (L) and Mike Wallace (R) in this handout photo taken September 1968 and released August 19, 2009. Hewitt, the creator of CBS News' ground-breaking "60 Minutes" program and one of the most influential behind-the-scenes figures in U.S. television journalism, died on August 19, 2009, at the age of 86, CBS News said. He had been diagnosed with cancer.

REUTERS/CBS/Frank Micelotta/Handout

*** Human Hints Daily ***

Particle Accelerators, Ancient Worlds and Reverence to the Unknown

It is absurd that scientists smash particles together, to see what's inside. Imagine if aliens started smashing people into each other, to see what comes out. They'd see an arm, a leg, heads crushed in different ways, and wonder how these parts fit together to form a person. They would curiously note that the pieces couldn't sustain life when they are separate from the whole.

These 'particles', as we so callously refer to them, are worlds beyond beauty. They are quantum groupings of energy. We know that quantum groupings of energy can hold consciousness, because the human body is simply energy bunched together in a single quantum Unit that our consciousness, our spirit, is expressing through.

I'm glad I'm not responsible for smashing Unknown Beings into each other. The Karmic Consequences are just too great. Considering how long subatomic particles have been around, it is certainly possible that we are smashing ancient gods into each other, in the name of Science.

Just because we can't interact or communicate with something doesn't mean it's not there, as physicists well know. Science has completely ignored the possibility of consciousness, and has declared life to be limited to life as we know it.

My academic training is in Engineering Physics, and I delight in the conveniences that science has provided as much as anyone. I'm just calling for practicing science with respect for what we might be doing. Science has proven the theory of cause and effect, but it seems blind to the possible consequences of smashing unknown worlds into each other.

Before we do something, we should decide if it is absolutely necessary. Judging by the amount of money that has gone into building particle accelerators, it seems that a small few representatives of humanity have made this decision for us. Now the least we can do is offer conscious energy unto the Universe, also known as praying, for the action we are about to commit.

Like a hunter thanking the spirit of the deer for the sustenance and warmth it is about to provide, Intent and Respect of others make all the difference to our

own lives.

Oh, Great Universe, forgive our ignorance while we pursue this determined path, for we do not think to respect the boundaries we may be crossing. Our natural tendencies blind us from the consequences of inflicting destruction. Our young, immature minds cannot fathom a consciousness outside of our own.

Oh, Great Consciousness that has been in existence for almost as long as the Universe itself, we sacrifice you this day in the name of Science. All things must pass. We are simply following the Laws of Time, when we smash your Being into that of another, and disintegrate your Energy into oblivion. We're not even sure what we can learn from this, but the funding is there, and it's really cool.

--Particle Accelerators 2

--Choose Your Actions Wisely

We've talked about being aware of the consequences of our actions, using particle accelerators as an example. Great theory, but it's useless if we can't apply it to our daily lives when we need it most.

In every conscious moment, we must remain fully aware that every action we take has a direct effect on others and on ourselves. When we keep this in mind, we will choose our actions far more seriously.

This is one way to detach from emotion in the midst of your daily trials. Instead of flying off the handle and reacting irrationally from raw emotion, remembering that every action holds a consequence might help us to calm down and think things through before taking logical action after weighing the benefits and consequences.

When deciding on an action, ask yourself who will be affected and how, including yourself. What is your intention behind the action? What result do you want to achieve? This will help us step out of irrational, reactionary emotion, and allow us to take action based on how it might affect others and ourselves.

Thinking about the possible consequences of our actions is the root of personal and societal morality. If we don't like it, there's a good chance that others won't like it either. The more we each choose to not hurt others in each moment, the fewer rules and restrictions we will need as



a society, both neighborhood and worldwide.

Many laws are in place because we don't think of the possible consequences of our actions. Many people, especially younger drivers, don't realize the delicate balance between driving carelessly and accidentally inflicting a life-changing traumatic incident onto an innocent stranger. The point is that speed limits are in place to prevent tragedy when people don't think about the consequences of speeding.

Think of what amazing parents we would all be if we thought more about the consequences our actions will have on our children. When parents respect their kids and consider how their actions will affect the kids, they are practicing Conscious Parenting. Let them be who they are, and don't be disappointed when they aren't who you expect them to be. Allow people of any age to create and follow their own path in life, but more on that another day.

As we become aware of our affect on the people and world around us, we will make decisions that help everyone and everything involved. Cooperation is the key to a thriving society and world. Competition is an outdated concept that hinders all efforts. This is ultimately a shift away from ego, and toward the next dimension of Love.

--Particle Accelerators 3

--Horton Hears a Who

This article has been dedicated to discussing the importance of being aware that actions have consequences to ourselves and to others. I used the example of particle accelerators smashing ancient gods into each other. This made me think of the book by Dr. Seuss, Horton Hears a Who.

From Wikipedia... "The book tells the story of Horton the Elephant who, on the fifteenth of May in the Jungle of Nool, hears a small speck of dust talking to

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him. It turns out the speck of dust is actually a tiny planet, home to a city called "Who-ville", inhabited by microscopic-sized inhabitants known as Whos. "The Whos ask Horton (who, though he cannot see them, is able to hear them quite well) to protect them from harm, which Horton happily agrees to do, proclaiming throughout the book that "even though you can't see or hear them at all, a person's a person, no matter how small". In doing so he is ridiculed and forced into a cage by the other animals in the jungle for believing in something that they are unable to see or hear. His chief tormentors are Vlad Vladikoff, the Wickersham Brothers and the Sour Kangaroo. Horton tells the Whos that, lest they end up being boiled in "Beezelnut Oil", they need to make themselves heard to the other animals. The Whos finally accomplish this by ensuring that all members of their society play their part. In the end it is a "very small shirker named JoJo" whose final addition to the volume creates enough lift for the jungle to hear the sound, thus reinforcing the moral of "a person's a person, no matter how small". Now convinced of the Whos' existence, Horton's neighbors vow to help him protect the tiny community."

It is interesting to note that in the end, the Whos are collectively making as much noise and racket as they possibly can. Every inhabitant of this tiny speck of dust is working together in cooperation to achieve a common goal of survival of their world. Do I sense foreshadowing? A lesson we can follow if the survival of our own tiny speck of dust is ever at stake. At one point all seems lost, as the inhabitants of the speck of dust planet are making

as much noise as they possibly can, to no avail. The threatening society of animals still do not hear them, until a little girl of about 3 is found alone in her room, not making a sound. She is quickly brought to the top of the tallest building in Whoville, and lets out a small peep. This proves to be the straw on the camel's back that makes the difference and allows the doubting animals to hear the tiny planet calling out in a plea for its very existence.

We will further explore the concept of 'straw on the camel's back'. For all things, there is a limit defined by a negligible, so tiny as to be meaningless, almost nonexistent quantity. Tipping Points are dynamic, where tiny forces can make all the difference in outcome. This is especially true in consciousness, where one person's thinking can blaze a Path in Thought for others to follow. A great teacher once said, "If I help just one person to become slightly more enlightened, my entire existence will have been worth it."

Go to www.HumanHints.com to sign up to receive this column in your email each day.

~ Quentin Danziger ~

Quentin has over 20 years experience balancing what we refer to as the Real World, with science and spirit. He has held positions of responsibility and authority, received a Bachelor of Science in Engineering Physics from Colorado School of Mines, and has also studied many avenues of alternative thought. HumanHints is the culmination of his knowledge, experience and practice. These free daily emails detail concrete, real-world techniques to consciously create any future you choose, while in the throes of daily life created by outdated modes of thought. □

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Wave of blasts in Iraqi capital kills at least 95

HAMZA HENDAWI
KIM GAMEL

Associated Press Writers

BAGHDAD (AP) — Nearly simultaneous truck bombs struck Iraq's Foreign and Finance ministries Wednesday as a wave of explosions killed at least 95 people, bringing the weaknesses of Iraqi security forces into sharp focus less than two months after U.S. forces withdrew from urban areas.

It was the deadliest day of coordinated bombings since Feb. 1, 2008, when two suicide bombers killed 109 people at pet markets in Baghdad. More than 400 were wounded in Wednesday's blasts.

The new American role was on sharp display as the military said it responded to onsite requests from Iraqi commanders for assistance, providing intelligence to help guide rescue crews and deploying explosives experts to clear areas of potential bombs.

U.S. transition teams assisted with security cordons and medics helped the wounded. Helicopters buzzed overhead.

"We helped the victims when and where we could, in accordance with our Iraqi allies' requests," said Lt. Col. Philip Smith, a spokesman for U.S. forces in Baghdad.

The extent of the carnage shocked the Shiited government and dealt a devastating blow to Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's efforts to return Baghdad to normal and reinforce his chances in parliamentary elections in January. Al-Maliki blamed Sunni insurgents linked to al-Qaida in Iraq and said the attacks were

designed to foil plans to open streets and remove concrete blast walls from Baghdad's main roads by mid-September.

He said the Iraqi government must reassess security measures — the first government acknowledgment that his moves may have been premature so soon after U.S. troops left the cities at the end of June.

"The criminal acts that took place today require us to re-evaluate our plans and security mechanisms in order to confront the terrorist challenges and to increase cooperation between security forces and the Iraqi people," he added in a departure from his usual calls on the public to hold steady in the face of an escalation of attacks.

He said an alliance of al-Qaida in Iraq and Saddam Hussein loyalists was behind the attacks, and that the government has placed Iraq's army and police forces on high alert.

The violence began when a suicide truck bomber took aim at the Finance Ministry complex in northern Baghdad, causing part of a nearby overpass to collapse. A female employee emerged from the building after the blast in an apparent state of shock, her clothes stained with blood.

Hospital officials said at least 28 people were killed and 117 wounded in that blast.

Minutes later, a truck bomb exploded outside the Foreign Ministry, charring dozens of cars in a parking lot and shattering the facade of the white, 10-story building located near the Green Zone.

Continued on Page B7

AP source: U.S. deficit \$1.58 trillion this year



PHILIP ELLIOTT

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The White House plans to announce the federal deficit is about \$262 billion less than officials predicted early this year, in part because the Obama administration has provided less aid than expected to Wall Street. The deficit still will be three times bigger than last year's.

The federal deficit this year will total \$1.58 trillion, a senior White House official said late Wednesday. The official spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the report before its release Tuesday when President Barack Obama will be on vacation in Massachusetts.

Continued on Next Page

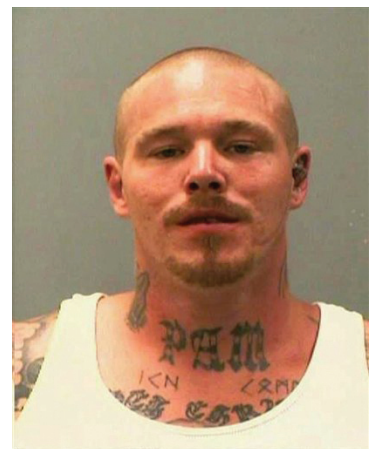
Md. police: Man nicknamed 'Hitler' beat black man

BEN NUCKOLS,

Associated Press Writer

BALTIMORE (AP) — A white supremacist accused of beating of a 76-year-old black man has a tattoo of Adolf Hitler on his stomach with the words "He Lives" beneath it, and uses the Nazi dictator's last name as a nickname, according to police and court documents. Calvin E. Lockner, 28, was ordered held without bail Wednesday morning. He's been charged with a long list of crimes including attempted murder, carjacking and assault, and prosecutors can seek tougher penalties under Maryland's hate crime law.

Continued on Page B5



This photo provided by the Baltimore Police Department on Tuesday, Aug. 18, 2009, shows Calvin Lockner. Baltimore police say they arrested Lockner, who was one of three white men who beat an elderly black fisherman in a city park, and the attack is being investigated as a hate crime.

Associated Press



Democratic Senators emerge from the White House in Washington, Tuesday, Aug. 4, 2009, following their lunch with President Obama. From left are: Senate Banking Committee Chairman Sen. Christopher Dodd, D-Conn.; Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid of Nev.; Senate Finance Committee Chairman Sen. Max Baucus, D-Mont.; Senate Majority Whip Richard Durbin of Ill.; and Sen. Charles Schumer, D-N.Y.

U.S. DEFICIT

Continued from Page B1

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office is expected to release its midsession review the same day. It estimated in June that it expected a deficit of \$1.825 trillion. The report for the budget year that ends Sept. 30 also would predict Washington to spend \$3.653 trillion this year,

Associated Press

the official said. Revenue, however, would reach only \$2.074 trillion.

The new deficit numbers are record-shattering, but would give the administration the opportunity to say that its policies have avoided a more extreme financial crisis and eliminated the need for further bank infusions.

Still, the deficit amount is

a tremendous obstacle for an administration trying to undertake massive policy overhauls in health care and the environment.

"Whether it's \$1.6 trillion or \$1.8 trillion, it's pretty bad," said Robert Bixby, executive director of the bipartisan fiscal watchdog The Concord Coalition. "I hope no one tries to spin that as good news."

But Stan Collender, a former congressional budget staffer, said the White House's new deficit numbers cannot be blamed on Obama. Collender, now with Qorvis Communications, a Washington consulting firm, noted that the deficit estimate when President George W. Bush left office was \$1.2 trillion and that did not include a tax adjustment and additional spending for operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, approved this year, that Bush also would have sought.

The midsummer report was supposed to have been released by mid-July but was delayed, which led to speculation the

White House was delaying the bad news until Congress left on its August recess. Other administrations delayed releasing similar reports during their first year in office.

Obama's budget had included a \$250 billion placeholder for a second bailout of the nation's troubled banks but did not ask Congress for it because of the fear that the administration was spending too heavily. The administration also had anticipated failures of more banks, but the survival of most banks saved billions for Washington.

The report comes during a rough patch for Obama's presidency. The rancor surrounding the Democrats' proposed health care overhaul also provides a distraction during a monthlong break when much of Washington is in a lull.

The administration predicted this year that unemployment would peak at about 9 percent without a big stimulus package and 8 percent with one. Congress passed a \$787

billion two-year stimulus measure, yet unemployment soared to 9.4 percent in July and appears headed for double digits.

The nation's debt, the total of accumulated annual budget deficits, now stands at \$11.7 trillion. In the scheme of things, that is more important than talking about the "deficit," which only looks at a one-year slice of bookkeeping and ignores previous indebtedness that is still outstanding.

Even so, the administration has projected that the annual deficit for the current budget year will hit the \$1.58 trillion figure, more than three times the size of last year's deficit of \$455 billion.

Economists predict that an improved economic climate could help reduce the deficit in the 2010 fiscal year to \$1.3 trillion. Obama has promised to reduce the budget to \$533 billion in the 2013 fiscal year. "The deficit is obviously very large and a problem," said economist Mark Zandi of Moody's Economy.com. □



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Numbers of poor projected to increase in U.S.

HOPE YEN
Associated Press Writer
 WASHINGTON (AP) — The numbers of poor and uninsured Americans are likely rising — with more than 38.8 million believed to be in poverty. Rebecca Blank, the Commerce Department’s undersecretary of economic affairs, spoke to The Associated Press in advance of next month’s closely watched release of 2008 census data. Noting the figures are not yet final,

Blank said the numbers will likely show a “statistically significant” increase in the poverty rate, to at least 12.7 percent. That would represent a jump of more than 1.5 million poor people last year. “There’s no question that 2008 economically was a much worse year than 2007,” she said Wednesday. “The question is how much and how bad.”

The number of Americans without medical insurance is also expected to notably increase due largely to rising unemployment and the erosion of private coverage paid for by employers and individuals, but Blank declined to say by how much. In 2007, the number of uninsured fell by more than 1 million mostly because government programs such as Medicaid for the poor picked up the slack.

The census figures, set to be released Sept. 10, could have important ramifications as Congress returns from its August recess to debate health reform, its cost, and the ways to pay for it. Republicans also have traditionally pointed to the intractable poverty rate as a sign that government programs do not work, a claim likely to be repeated often in light of the federal economic stimulus package.

In a 30-minute interview, Blank said the census figures released next month could possibly understate the actual number of poor people, since the poverty rate is a lagging indicator that tends to accelerate over time. As a result, the 2008 data could prove to be the tip of the iceberg, with more significant declines reflected in 2009 figures released next year.

Blank, a former co-director of the National Poverty Center at the University of Michigan, estimated this year that poverty could eventually hit 14.8 percent or more in the United States should unemployment reach 10 percent as some analysts have predicted. That would be almost one of every seven Americans.

Based on 2007 figures, the poverty rate currently stands at 12.5 percent, or 37.3 million, largely unchanged from recent years. The official poverty level is now \$21,203 for a family of four, \$13,540 for a family of two, based on a calculation that includes only cash income before deductions for taxes. It excludes capital gains and it does not take into account accumulated wealth or assets, such as a home.

On Wednesday, Blank said she was working with the Census Bureau to provide better measures of poverty. Such alternative measures, which will be released sometime after Sept. 10, will seek to better incorporate added costs of health care, child care, housing and transportation, but also noncash income from the stimulus and other government programs, such as tax credits and food stamps.

Two dead in military chopper crash on Colo. mountain

LEADVILLE, Colo. — A military helicopter crashed Wednesday near the peak of Colorado’s second-highest mountain, killing two people, injuring one and leaving another person missing, authorities said.

The Black Hawk helicopter from Kentucky’s Fort Campbell was carrying out training exercises when it struck about 400 feet from the top of 14,200-foot Mount Massive, according to the Lake County Sheriff’s office and the Federal Aviation Administration.

The injured person was flown to a Denver hospital, while rescue teams searched for the missing person, said Sheriff spokesman Max Duarte. The condition of the injured was not immediately known.

The helicopter was assigned to the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (Airborne) and was conducting routine training, according to the Army Special Operations Command at Fort Bragg, N.C. Its Web site says soldiers from the 160th have carried out combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, but the Army did not elaborate on the purpose of the Colorado maneuvers.

Sheriff’s spokeswoman Betty Benson told The Gazette in Colorado Springs that the two who died were soldiers from Fort Campbell. Officials have not released any details on the identities of the four aboard.

The Army statement said that rescue operations were under way but did not elaborate. The Denver Post reported that the two ambulance helicopters were at the scene.

The newspaper also said the Black Hawk’s flight recorder was recovered. The cause of the crash has not been released.

Duarte said he did not know how long the helicopter was training in the central mountain region. Leadville, a town with a population of 2,600, is about 80 miles southwest of Denver and is surrounded by rugged wilderness and lofty peaks, several more than 13,000 feet high. U.S. Forest Service said its workers building trails with a youth group heard the 2 p.m. MDT crash but witness it.

Fort Campbell spokesman Maj. Brandon Bissell referred questions to the special operations command.

Soldiers in the 160th are known as “night stalkers” because they specialize in nighttime operations, according to the military.

The MH-60 Black Hawk is frequently used for overt and covert infiltration missions, as well as to bring supplies to special operations forces in the field, according to the unit’s Web site. The helicopter is also used for rescue and medical evacuations, and an armed version is used for armed escort and fire support. □

Hurricane Bill fierce as Category 4 in Atlantic

By JENNIFER KAY
Associated Press Writer
 MIAMI — Hurricane Bill howled over the open Atlantic as a fierce Category 4 storm Wednesday, and it could be energized by warmer waters as it moves north. Forecasters said Bill should begin pushing large swells toward Bermuda and parts of the southeastern U.S. coast by the weekend, but it wasn’t yet clear how close the storm will come to land. Richard Pasch, a senior hurricane specialist at National Hurricane Center said computer models continue to keep the storm’s path away from the eastern coast of the United States.

“We can’t be absolutely sure, but we’re feeling pretty good about it,” Pasch said.

The hurricane center did say people in the Leeward Islands should keep an eye on the storm, though its core was expected to pass

well to the northeast of the chain in the next day. Fishermen in Antigua were advised to dock their boats.

As fierce as Bill already is, it could get stronger because it’s traveling into warmer waters in the Atlantic that could intensify the storm, said senior hurricane specialist Lixion Avila.

“The warm ocean is like the fuel for car,” Avila said. “If you get high octane gas you get more power — that’s what warmer water does.”

Bill was maintaining a top wind speed of 135 mph late Wednesday, but forecasters said it could get stronger. The storm’s eye was located 315 miles east of the Leeward Islands and it was moving west-northwest near 20 mph.

Pasch said there’s no reason for the storm to weaken over the next few days. While the path is taking it mostly over the water, Pasch said the effects of the storm are going to be felt well removed from the center. □



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Sen. John Ensign: I did nothing 'legally wrong'



In this June 22, 2009 file photo, Sen. John Ensign, R-Nev., talks with reporters on his way to a vote on Capitol Hill in Washington.

Associated Press

By SCOTT SONNER

Associated Press Writer

FERNLEY, Nev. — Sen. John Ensign told The Associated Press on Wednesday that his affair with a friend's wife was different from former President Bill Clinton's relationship with a White House intern because he didn't lie about it under oath.

"I haven't done anything legally wrong," the Nevada Republican said.

"President Clinton stood right before the American people and he lied to the American people," Ensign said. "You remember that famous day he lied to the American people, plus the fact I thought he committed perjury. That's why I voted for the articles of impeachment."

Ensign made the remarks before being introduced to a standing ovation from about 100 people at a Chamber of Commerce luncheon in rural Fernley, about 40 miles east of Reno. Ensign opened his speech by acknowledging what he called a "distraction." "I think it would be inappropriate to start any other way than to say I'm sorry," he said. "I've said I'm sorry. I can't say I'm sorry enough. I made a big mistake in my life and I apologize once again to all of you."

The luncheon was Ensign's first public appearance in his home state since acknowledging in June that he had an extramarital affair with former campaign aide Cynthia Hampton.

Ensign resigned as head of the Republican Policy Committee after admitting to the affair with Hampton from December 2007 to August 2008. Hampton's husband, Doug, was Ensign's administrative assistant in his Washington, D.C., Senate office and the families were friends.

Ensign's attorney has also said that Ensign's parents paid the woman and her family \$96,000 after learning about the affair.

Ensign once called on President Bill Clinton to resign after his affair with White House intern Monica Lewinsky erupted in 1998, declaring: "The truth

must come out."

Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington, government watchdog group, has called for investigations into Ensign by the Senate Ethics Committee and the Federal Elections Commission.

Melanie Sloan, CREW's executive director, said Ensign's distinction between his situation and that of Clinton was essentially an attempt to claim his affair was less contemptible.

"Isn't that a little like saying, 'It depends on what the meaning of the word 'is' is?'" she said in a statement Wednesday. "One politician comparing his illicit affair to another's is a sure sign his career is in trouble."

Ensign told the AP on Wednesday that he can understand how some people might "have a problem" with the fact he called for Clinton's resignation but won't resign himself.

"But if you look at the times ... I was in the House of Representatives but basically was sitting in judgment of the president evaluating the case. I was basically a jurist at that point. I thought there was a violation of a felony," he said. Ensign said in the interview he never considered resigning from the Senate and is focused on fulfilling his six-year term. "What we're trying to do is go around to people in the state of Nevada and tell them how sorry I am for what I did. But now I need to focus on earning their trust back by working harder than I've ever worked for them," Ensign said. "There's no magic to hard work. It is literally focusing on what is important to Nevadans. Right now, the biggest issue Nevadans and the rest of the country face is health care."

Ensign spoke for about 30 minutes at the luncheon and answered a handful of questions submitted on cards. None were about the affair.

Later Wednesday he toured a U.S. Forest Service project at Lake Tahoe aimed at thinning forests to reduce fuel loads in an effort to reduce wildfire threats. □





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Tornado, storms cause heavy damage in Midwest

By NOMAAN MERCHANT
Associated Press Writer

MINNEAPOLIS — Powerful winds slammed parts of four Midwestern states on Wednesday, leaving behind shattered windows, toppled power lines and a handful of injuries. At least a half dozen suspected tornadoes were reported.

The National Weather Service received reports of a possible tornado near downtown Minneapolis, where winds tore off part of a 90-year-old metal church steeple. Wisconsin, Iowa and Illinois were also hit, though the only confirmed tornado as of Wednesday night was in Hastings, about 30 miles southeast of Minneapolis, where a 100-yard-long swath of trees was flattened.

Jack Freitag said he was standing in the lobby of the Central Lutheran Church in Minneapolis when he saw “a wall cloud from the south

coming across the parking lot.” Then a “very loud roar” came through as he saw signs being blown around in the wind.

The wind tore off part of the church’s 90-year-old metal steeple around 2 p.m. while about 120 people were inside, said church spokesman Joe Bjordal.

“I was worried about the people then,” said Freitag, who told everyone to seek shelter in the church’s basement. No one was injured.

Outside the church, strong winds ripped apart large outdoor tents and scattered chairs and folding tables across the parking lot that were set up for the national Evangelical Lutheran Church in America convention. The church was scheduled to serve breakfast to guests attending the event at the Minneapolis Convention Center next door. “I think we’re out of business”

for entertaining convention visitors, Bjordal said.

At the Electric Fetus, a landmark independent music store near downtown, strong winds shattered one of the store’s windows and caused the roof to cave in.

“It was just the loudest crashing noise,” said Stephanie Covart, the store’s co-owner. “We didn’t know what was happening.”

A glass panel on a nearby bus shelter was shattered, leaving scattered pieces of glass on the sidewalk.

Meteorologist Dan Luna said it was the sort of storm that meteorologists dread — it didn’t look dangerous until it was.

“We worry about the really benign thunderstorm that develops a tornado in the



Parts of a tree are seen on a damaged car in Minneapolis, Wednesday, Aug. 19, 2009. The National Weather Service issued a tornado warning based on radar observations for the counties that include Minneapolis and St. Paul. People also reported seeing a tornado just north of downtown Minneapolis.

Associated Press

metropolitan area,” Luna said. “These sort-lived ones form very quickly and dissipate very fast. They are very hard to predict.”

Luna said crews would evaluate the damage in downtown Minneapolis to see if there was more. □

HITLER

Continued from Page B1

Lockner told police that the attack early Tuesday on James A. Privott, who had been fishing with his wife in a city park beneath the Francis Scott Key Bridge, “wouldn’t have happened if he was a white man,” court documents show.

Lockner, a convicted sex offender, has other racist tattoos and told police he was a member of two white supremacist groups, including the notorious prison gang the Aryan Brotherhood.

When Lockner was taken into custody, he said, “I’m sorry I did it,” the documents show.

Lockner and two other white men shouted racial slurs as they kicked Privott to the ground, punched him in the face and hit him with a baseball bat, the documents show.

The men stole \$19 from Privott’s wallet and drove off in his sport utility vehicle, which was equipped with a theft-monitoring device. Police tracked down the vehicle, which overturned and crashed after the driver fled. The men ran off, but officers found Lockner with the help of a witness, police said.

Police had not yet found the two other suspects Wednesday afternoon.


Privott suffered serious head trauma and lost two teeth and may also have broken an eye socket bone. He was in fair condition Wednesday at the University of Maryland Shock Trauma Center, a spokeswoman said. His wife was not injured.

Privott’s stepdaughter said he was doing OK and that police had asked the family not to speak to reporters during the investigation.

Baltimore is about two-thirds black, and police monitor the city’s active white supremacists, Police Commissioner Frederick H. Bealefeld III said.


Mayor Sheila Dixon said she met with Privott in the hospital Tuesday, and he told her about good fishing spots around the city and suggested the park he was attacked in may need better lighting and security.

“People should have the right to go out ... fishing, relaxing, in a great park in the city,” Dixon said. “His family is understandably shaken from this and by the violence and what was said to him and what was done to him.” □



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Glitch forces S. Korea to abort rocket launch



The Korea Space Launch Vehicle-1, South Korea's first space rocket, sits on its launch pad at the Naro Space Center in Goheung, south of Seoul, South Korea, Tuesday, Aug. 18, 2009. South Korea will launch the country's first rocket on Wednesday.

Associated Press

HYUNG-JIN KIM,
Associated Press Writer
SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — A technical glitch forced South Korea to abort liftoff of its first

rocket into space, delaying a launch that threatened to stoke tensions with North Korea even as Pyongyang joined in mourning a leader who pushed tirelessly for reconciliation.

The rival Koreas are eager to develop space programs, and had aimed to send satellites into space this year. In April, the North launched a three-stage rocket it claimed sent a communications satellite into orbit; some experts doubt the mission succeeded.

Washington, Tokyo and others called that launch a disguised test of long-range missile technology. The U.N. Security Council condemned the launch, saying it was a violation of resolutions banning North Korea from ballistic missile-related activity.

However, there have been recent signs of easing tensions — the North freed two imprisoned American journalists when former

President Bill Clinton came to Pyongyang and met with leader Kim Jong Il. Later, the North freed a South Korean technician and agreed to resume some joint tourism and industry projects with Seoul.

And on Wednesday, New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson met with two North Korean diplomats. Richardson called the meeting a “hopeful sign” of improving relations.

Yet as South Korea geared up for its rocket launch, North Korea warned it would be “watching closely” for the international response to Seoul's launch.

“Their reaction and attitude toward South Korea's satellite launch will once again clearly prove whether the principle of equality exists or has collapsed,” a spokesman for the Foreign Ministry told North Korea's official news agency. South Korea's launch was called off less than eight

minutes before the scheduled liftoff, senior Science Ministry official Lee Sang-mok said. The two-stage rocket, built with Russian help, would have been South Korea's first satellite launch from its own territory.

South Korean and Russian scientists were investigating the malfunction that halted the launch, and Russian scientists believed another attempt could occur within days, Lee said. He said a high-pressure tank that helps operate valves in the launch vehicle may have been the problem.

Despite the North's objections, U.S. and South Korean officials say the rocket launches cannot be compared, maintaining that South Korea has carried out the process transparently, and for peaceful purposes, while the North has not abided by its international commitments. The Koreas remain in a state of war since their conflict ended

in a truce in 1953. Relations have been tense since President Lee Myung-bak took office in Seoul in 2008, abandoning ex-President Kim Dae-jung's policy of encouraging reconciliation with aid.

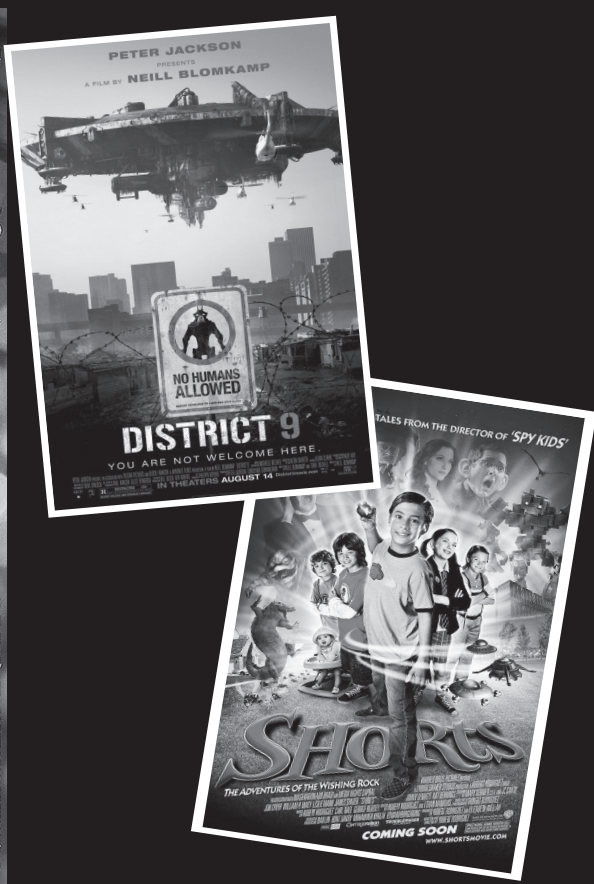
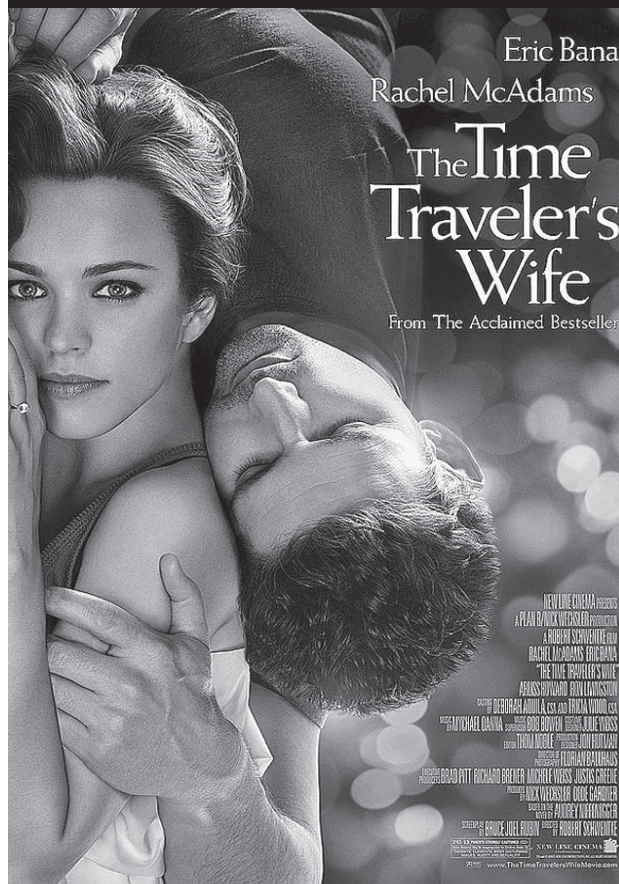
North Korea put its army on alert this week as the U.S. and South Korea held military exercises in the South. Washington and Seoul say the computer-simulated war games are purely defensive. But North Korea's Foreign Ministry warned they were “aggravating” tensions on the Korean peninsula.

In the latest sign of a thaw, two diplomats from North Korea's U.N. mission met with Richardson, who twice went to North Korea in the 1990s to secure the release of Americans. Richardson declined to comment on the substance of the talks or say why North Korea requested the meeting. □

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	matinee:	12:50	3:15	late show:	12:30
R	THE HANGOVER				
	daily:	7:30	9:45		
	matinee:			late show:	12:00
PG	ALIENS IN THE ATTIC				
	daily:	5:15			
	matinee:	12:45	3:00	late show:	
PG-13	G.I. JOE: THE RISE OF THE COBRA				
	daily:	5:45	8:30		
	matinee:	12:30	3:15	late show:	11:15
R	THE ORPHAN				
	daily:	6:15	8:45		
	matinee:	12:45	3:30	late show:	11:30
PG	SHORTS				
	daily:	4:15	6:15	8:15	10:15
	matinee:	12:15	2:15	late show:	12:15
PG	ICE AGE 3 DAWN OF THE DINOSAURS				3D
	daily:	4:00	6:00		
	matinee:	12:00	2:00	late show:	
PG-13	TRANSFORMER 2				
	daily:	8:00			
	matinee:			late show:	11:00

AT PASEO HERENCIA

PG-13	DISTRICT 9				
	daily:	5:15	7:45	10:15	
	matinee:	12:30	3:00	late show:	12:30
R	THE UGLY TRUTH				
	daily:	4:45	7:00	9:15	
	matinee:	12:15	2:30	late show:	11:30
PG-13	THE PROPOSAL				
	daily:	9:30			
	matinee:			late show:	12:15
PG	HARRY POTTER AND THE HALF-BLOOD PRINCE				
	daily:	5:45			
	matinee:	2:15		late show:	
R	THE HANGOVER				
	daily:	7:30	9:45		
	matinee:			late show:	11:15
PG-13	JULIE AND JULIA				
	daily:	4:45			
	matinee:	2:00		late show:	
R	FUNNY PEOPLE				
	daily:	9:00			
	matinee:			late show:	12:00
PG	G-FORCE				3D
	daily:	5:00	7:15		
	matinee:	12:30	2:45	late show:	
PG-13	G.I. JOE: THE RISE OF THE COBRA				
	daily:	6:00	8:30		
	matinee:	12:45	3:30	late show:	11:15



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WAVE OF BLASTS

Continued from Page B1

The massive blast left a 30-by-15-foot crater and knocked down part of the concrete wall surrounding the ministry's perimeter, killing at least 59 people and wounding 250.

It blew out windows of the building and left furniture turned upside down inside exposed offices. Wires dangled and air conditioning pipes were ruptured. Slabs of concrete hung precariously from the front of the building.

Firefighters extracted charred bodies from vehicles that had been caught in the explosion.

Several of the apartment buildings across the street from the ministry complex were extensively damaged. Satellite dishes were mangled or blown away.

Young men complained of partisan politics and the failures of the security forces in anger that echoed across the city.

"Today's failure is the final straw for me," said Salem Mattar, a 31-year-old construction worker. "Government officials have 30-strong security details and don't care about ordinary folks."

Suspected mortar shells also slammed into the Green Zone, Iraqi officials said, with one landing near the U.N. compound, briefly delaying a news conference being held to discuss humanitarian issues on the sixth anniversary of the Aug. 19, 2003, bombing at the world body's headquarters that killed 22 people, including top U.N. envoy Sergio Vieira de Mello.

The U.S. military, which turned over responsibility for securing the Green Zone to the Iraqis on Jan. 1, said it could not confirm any mortar attacks.

Another blast in the commercial area of western Baghdad's Baiyaa district killed two people and wounded 16, while a bombing in the commercial district of Bab al-Muadham killed six people and wounded 24, authorities said.

Shiite politicians, including some close to al-Maliki, have been charging recently that Sunni-ruled Saudi Arabia and other Arab neighbors were orchestrating a violent campaign to destabilize Shiite majority Iraq.

Speaking at the Foreign Ministry bomb site, Shiite Mayor Saber al-Issawi echoed those charges when

he suggested that Iraq's "enemies" in the region were determined to reverse what he called the government's recent successes.

The White House condemned the attacks, with spokesman Robert Gibbs saying they show "how far extremists will go to wreak havoc." But he said that the overall number of attacks in Iraq is "at or near an all-time low." The U.S. military has warned that militants are trying to provoke new bloodshed to re-ignite retaliatory sectarian warfare and undermine public trust in the Iraqi government.

U.S. troops withdrew from Iraq's cities June 30 under a security pact that outlines the American withdrawal by the end of 2011. President Barack Obama has ordered all U.S. combat troops out of Iraq by Aug. 31, 2010, leaving up to 50,000 U.S. troops in training and advising roles.

"The terrorists are trying to rekindle the cycle of violence of past years by creating a climate of tension among the Iraqi people," President Jalal Talabani said in a statement. "Our security forces must be more alert and firm. Also, the political groups must unite." Sunni and Shiite extremists remain active in Iraq, and the



U.S. military has detected some political violence ahead of the national elections. But truck bombs and suicide attacks bear the hallmarks of al-Qaida in Iraq.

"The security forces have failed to protect the government buildings despite tight security measures and advanced equipment and this reflects huge shortcomings," said Saeed Jabar, a 35-year-

old government employee. "It is a message to Iraqi officials that they should stop their exaggerations about the stability of this country." □



Afghan vote could aid war effort but not end it



Afghan President and incumbent in presidential elections Hamid Karzai inspects an honor guard during Independence Day celebrations at the Defence Ministry compound in Kabul, Wednesday, Aug. 19, 2009. Afghans will go to the polls to vote for a new president Thursday.

Associated Press

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Photo by Diane Keijzer



ROBERT BURNS

AP National Security Writer
WASHINGTON (AP)

— Thursday's election in Afghanistan will not end the eight-year fight against the Taliban, bring U.S. troops home sooner or ensure a competent democratic government. Officials say it could, however, help stem the recent political gains of the Taliban, the Islamic fundamentalist movement that ruled Afghanistan in the late 1990s and gave refuge to Osama bin Laden.

That hopeful result depends on whether the voting is seen by ordinary Afghans as legitimate — no certainty in a country whose army and other institutions were built and paid for largely by the U.S. and other foreigners. Many Afghans take it for granted that the election outcome has been predetermined, even though U.S. officials and international groups have taken pains to stress their neutrality.

The election comes at a point of weak U.S. public support for the war amid rising U.S. casualties. A Washington Post-ABC News poll released Wednesday found that a majority of Americans see the war as not worth fighting.

Karl Eikenberry, the retired three-star Army general who became U.S. ambassador to

Kabul in May, said in an e-mail exchange with The Associated Press on Wednesday that the elections can be an important step toward achieving the key U.S. goal of preventing Afghanistan from again sheltering al-Qaida.

"This election is vital to strengthen the connections between the Afghan people and their leaders," Eikenberry wrote. "Only by doing so will the violence that afflicts their country eventually be contained and will Afghanistan never again become a haven for international terrorism."

There is a risk, however, that rising violence — during the balloting or in the weeks to follow — could undermine rather than strengthen the legitimacy of the Afghan government. So the fact that millions could cast their vote in the midst of a war may not, by itself, ensure a step toward political stability.

"Whether the election is seen as legitimate, whether the election leads to violence — those things will have just as much impact on the political situation" as the balloting itself, said Nora Bensahel, senior political scientist at the RAND Corp., a largely government-funded think tank.

Retired Lt. Gen. David Barno, who commanded U.S. forces in Afghanistan during the first post-invasion presidential election, in 2004, said it would be perilous to predict whether the election will improve stability.

"The degree to which the results of the election are accepted by the people of Afghanistan as legitimate is an absolute unknown right now," he said, adding that the vote could lead to "significant destabilizing."

Incumbent President Hamid Karzai is expected to win re-election, although he is seen as weak by many Afghans and faces the possibility of a run-off election if he fails to gain at least 50 percent of the vote. The hope is that the next Afghan government — regardless of who holds the presidency — can make strides toward weeding out official corruption and establishing

a workable justice system. Those achievements are seen by many as key to keeping the international financial and military support in place.

"This is a chance for the Afghans to change our minds" about their commitment to good governance, said Sean Maloney, associate professor of history at the Royal Military College of Canada.

Some observers think the elections could do more harm than good.

Jeremy Shapiro, a researcher at the Brookings Institution think tank, wrote in an essay this week that with luck the elections will produce a stronger, more legitimate government.

"But there is great fear that fraud will delegitimize the government, that Election Day violence will broadcast insurgent strength, and that popular anger over the results will produce street protests and violence," he wrote.

Elections are not necessary to achieve the central U.S. aim of ensuring that Afghanistan does not again become a haven for al-Qaida, Shapiro wrote, "and indeed put (that goal) at risk." Thursday's voting under the best of circumstances is unlikely to lighten the load on American and allied combat forces. Almost eight years after the U.S. invasion that toppled the Taliban regime, the military mission is practically beginning anew, against a foe that draws strength from the Afghan government's weakness.

Just three years ago the U.S. had about 20,000 forces in the country. Today, it has triple that, on its way to 68,000 by year's end. Paradoxically, as the U.S. force has grown, so, too, has the influence and the military effectiveness of the Taliban, particularly in the southern part of the country.

That is why so much is riding on the outcome of Thursday's vote. "If the next president — and I think this weighs most heavily on President Karzai — comes out of this election with questioned legitimacy then we are all in trouble," said J. Alexander Thier, an Afghanistan watcher at the U.S. Institute of Peace. □

Aruba TODAY

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Latin leftists fear a Honduras coup domino effect

ALEXANDRA OLSON

Associated Press Writer

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras (AP) — Manuel Zelaya's chances of getting restored to the Honduran presidency become more distant with each passing week. Across Latin America, his allies and foes alike see a precedent being set.

It's a glimmer of hope for the region's conservative elite, which has watched with dismay over the past decade as a wave of leftist presidents has risen to power, promising to topple the establishment and give greater power to the poor. When the once-moderate Zelaya started down that path, Honduras' military, Congress and Supreme Court teamed up to oust him, and despite protests from across the hemisphere the coup-installed government remains in place. Could this be the model Latin America's conservatives were desperately seeking?

Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, who was briefly ousted in a 2002 coup himself, said Cuba's Fidel Castro told him the situation in Honduras will "open the door to the wave of coups coming in Latin America."

"Fidel says something that is very true," he said.

Added Ecuadorean President Rafael Correa, a close ally of Chavez and Zelaya: "We have intelligence reports that say that after Zelaya, I'm next."

Across the region, conservatives who long ruled Latin America — and still own much of it — are showing signs of unrest, with armed uprisings in Bolivia and marches in Guatemala where tens of thousands of protesters have demanded the president resign.

But the most extreme case came in Honduras, a country with three decades of political stability and seven consecutive democratically elected presidents.

"This coup really surprised us," said Jorge Acevedo, deputy director of a Honduran human rights group. "We thought the issue of civilian rule was something we had resolved a long time ago."

Soldiers arrested Zelaya



In this June 29, 2009 file photo, Bolivia's President Evo Morales, left, Honduras' ousted President Manuel Zelaya, second left, Nicaragua's President Daniel Ortega, third left, Venezuela's President Hugo Chavez, fourth left, and Ecuador's President Rafael Correa pose for a photo at the Bolivarian Alternative of the Americas group, or ALBA, in Managua.

on June 28 and flew him into exile, and within hours Congress swore in the next-in-line to the presidency, Roberto Micheletti. In the six weeks since, demonstrations by Zelaya supporters and diplomatic efforts by countries ranging from the United States to Venezuela have been unsuccessful in orchestrating Zelaya's return.

Argentina's Cristina Fernandez, whose popularity has plummeted, said allowing Honduras' interim government to remain in power until Nov. 29 presidential elections would undermine democracy across the region.

"It would be enough for someone to stage a civilian coup, backed by the armed forces, or simply a civilian one and later justify it by convoking elections," Fernandez told South American leaders. "And then democratic guarantees would truly be fiction."

Honduras responded Tuesday by giving Argentina's diplomatic mission 72 hours to leave the country.

Those who have stirred turmoil in left-led countries insist they are the ones defending democracy.

Many of the so-called "revolutionary" governments that have been voted into power from Nicaragua to Bolivia have not only tried to redistribute wealth but also

remove limits on their time in power. Many have reduced the powers of opponents in ways that have made traditional elites feel their private holdings, investments and democratic freedoms are under attack.

"I think Zelaya gave enough reasons to be removed from government — reasons that exist in abundance in Venezuela," said Venezuelan opposition leader Jose Luis Farias. "Chavez has violated the constitution a lot more than Zelaya did."

In Bolivia, opposition Gov. Ruben Costas called Zelaya's ouster a logical reaction to "a process that follows the same book as Chavez, which only seeks constitutional changes to perpetuate strongmen."

"There is a limit in countries where we are suffering abuses," he told radio Erbol.

Of course, the Honduras precedent goes only so far.

No other leader in the region faces the utter political isolation that drove Zelaya from power so swiftly and efficiently: The military, the Supreme Court and even Zelaya's own political party turned against him when he deepened his allegiance with Chavez and pursued constitutional changes in defiance of court rulings.

Elsewhere in the region, many of the leaders have already

for getting back into power. "Removing Chavez through legal means — that is, through institutions — is very difficult because he has absolute control over all the institutions of the country," Farias said. Leftist leaders are taking no chances.

Ecuador has announced plans to create citizens committees to defend against Honduras-style coups. Correa has not provided details of how the groups will work, but critics fear they could become something akin to Cuba's Committees for the Defense of the Revolution, used to monitor "counterrevolutionary" activities. Bolivian President Evo Morales, who calls two weeks of deadly protests in the eastern lowlands last year a "civilian coup," recently announced that three men killed by police had been planning to assassinate him in a plot backed by opposition leaders.

Guatemala's Alvaro Colom said he was being targeted by elites angry about his attempts to eliminate corporate tax loopholes when thousands took to the streets in May. □

Associated Press

solidified their hold on power, in part through referendums and new constitutions overwhelmingly approved by voters. In Venezuela, other branches of government including congress and the judiciary are stacked with Chavez allies, leaving his opponents with few options



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SPORTS

Aruba TODAY



In this July 4, 2009, file photo, the United States' Serena Williams, right, and her sister Venus Williams, left, pose prior to their women's singles final on the Centre Court at Wimbledon.

Associated Press

APNewsBreak: Venus, Serena to own part of Dolphins

STEVEN WINE

AP Sports Writer

MIAMI (AP) — Venus and Serena Williams will become the latest celebrities to own a stake in the Miami Dolphins, a person familiar with the deal said on Wednesday.

The person didn't want to be identified because the NFL team plans to announce the involvement of the tennis-playing sisters next week.

Another person close to the negotiations said an agreement was near but not yet final. That person also didn't want to be identified because the announcement has not been made.

The Williamses live in Palm Beach Gardens, about an hour's drive from the Dolphins' stadium. Their new role is significant in part because the NFL has no African-American majority team owner.

Musicians Gloria and Emilio Estefan and Marc Anthony recently bought small shares of the team. New Dolphins owner Stephen Ross also forged a partnership with singer Jimmy Buffett.

The Dolphins have said the involvement of the celebrities reflects the diversity of South Florida and shows that the team is connected with the community.

A Dolphins spokesman said the team had no comment regarding next week's announcement.

The Williams sisters have combined to win 18 Grand Slam titles, and they staged their latest sibling showdown last month at Wimbledon, where Serena beat Venus in the final.

Serena has won 11 major titles and Venus seven.

Ross, a New York real estate billionaire, completed his purchase of the Dolphins from Wayne Huizenga in January. He began a partnership in May with Buffett. The agreement with the Estefans was announced in June, followed by the deal with Anthony last month.

Buffett and the Estefans are longtime Dolphins fans. The Williams sisters aren't known to closely follow the Dolphins or the NFL. Ross has said the minority owners are strategic partners and aren't being brought aboard because of a financial need. He has pledged to improve the fan experience at games, and the celebrities will help — although it's unlikely the sisters will be staging tennis exhibitions at halftime. □



South Africa's Caster Semenya celebrates after winning the gold medal in the final of the Women's 800m during the World Athletics Championships in Berlin on Wednesday, Aug. 19, 2009.

Associated Press

Semenya shakes off gender test uproar to win 800-meter

RYAN LUCAS

Associated Press Writer

BERLIN (AP) — South African teenager Caster Semenya shook off a gender test controversy Wednesday to easily win the 800-meter gold medal at the world championships.

Semenya's dominating performance was all the more remarkable because it came the same day the IAAF announced that the 18-year-old runner was undergoing a gender verification test amid concerns she does not meet the requirements to compete as a woman.

The South African, who did not speak to reporters after the race, took the lead at the halfway mark and opened up a commanding lead on the field in the last 400 meters to win in a world leading 1 minute, 55.45 seconds.

After crossing the line, Semenya dusted her shoulders off with her hands, as though wiping away the controversy that has surrounded her at her first major competition.

Defending champion Janeth Jepkosgei was second, a massive 2.45 seconds behind. Jennifer Meadows of Britain took bronze in 1:57.93.

About three weeks ago, the IAAF asked the South African athletics federation to conduct the gender test after Semenya burst onto the scene by posting a world leading time of 1:56.72 at the African junior championships in Bambous, Maruitius.

The teenager's stunning improvement in times,

along with her muscular build and deep voice, sparked speculation about her gender.

In ideal circumstances, any controversy surrounding an athlete is dealt with before a major competition. But Semenya's stunning rise from an unknown teenage runner to the favorite in the 800 happened almost overnight, and that meant the gender test — which takes several weeks — could not be completed in time.

IAAF spokesman Nick Davies underlined the sensitivity of the matter, and stressed that "it's a medical issue, not an issue of cheating." He said the "extremely complex, difficult" test has been started but that the results were not expected for weeks.

The verification test requires a physical medical evaluation, and includes reports from a gynecologist, endocrinologist, psychologist, an internal medicine specialist and an expert on gender.

"So we're talking about reports that are very long, very time consuming," Davies said. South Africa team manager Phiwe Mlangeni-Tsholetsane would not confirm or deny that Semenya was having a gender test, but said "there was no cheating on our part."

"We entered Caster as a woman and we want to keep it that way," Mlangeni-Tsholetsane said. "Our conscience is clear in terms of Caster. We have no reservations at all about that." □

AL Roundup

Jeter streak continues as Yankees beat Athletics 7-2

OAKLAND, California (AP) — New York's Derek Jeter had his third straight three-hit game and knocked in the go-ahead run to lift the Yankees to a 7-2 win over the Oakland Athletics in the American League on Tuesday.

Jeter's RBI single in the sixth broke a 2-2 tie and the Yankees went on to add four more runs that inning.

New York pitcher C.C. Sabathia got his first win at Oakland for six years, having had a 1-4 record and 7.12 ERA in eight starts there before Tuesday.

Sabathia gave up solo homers in the first two innings but gave up only three more hits in eight innings.

In Arlington, Texas, Joe Mauer homered twice as Minnesota notched a key win over Texas.

Delmon Young hit a tiebreaking two-run shot in the seventh inning for the Twins, who are clinging to contention in the AL Central race.

Young also had a tying two-run double for the Twins, who piled up 12 hits and eight runs in the sixth, seventh and eighth innings as part of their rally from a 5-0 deficit.

Texas, who re-acquired its former All-Star catcher Ivan Rodriguez earlier Tuesday in a trade with Houston, dropped into a tie with Boston for the AL wild-card lead.

Mauer started the seventh with his second leadoff homer of the game and finished 3 for 5 to keep his major league-leading average at .380.

Tigers 5, Mariners 3

In Detroit, Miguel Cabrera hit a go-ahead, two-run single in the eighth inning as Detroit overcame Seattle.

Detroit boosted its lead in the AL Central to three games.

In the eighth, a homer pulled the Tigers within a run, and that was followed by a single, an error and a walk to load the bases, setting up Cabrera's clutch hit.

Detroit pitcher Rick Porcello had a career-high eight

strikeouts, giving up just one run over 5 2-3 innings. He allowed a leadoff hit, then didn't give up another until a homer in the sixth made it 1-1.

In Cleveland, Los Angeles won its fourth on the trot, edging Cleveland.

Angels pitcher Trevor Bell got his first major league win, giving up three runs over 5 1-3 innings in the second start of his career.

Los Angeles opened a 5-1/2 game lead in the AL West. The Angels have scored 65 runs in winning seven of eight, and all nine hitters in their starting lineup Tuesday are batting over .300 for the season.

Red Sox 10, Blue Jays 9

In Toronto, David Ortiz homered and scored three times, including the go-ahead run in the eighth inning, as Boston pipped Toronto.

With the score tied 7-7, Ortiz walked to begin the eighth and

took second on a single. Alex Gonzalez bunted back to the mound but the pitcher bobbled the ball then threw wildly to first, allowing Ortiz to score.

A sacrifice fly and RBI double put the Red Sox up by three.

Toronto had a chance to win it in the bottom of the eighth, but Adam Lind's long shot was caught on the warning track, leaving the bases loaded.

In St. Petersburg, Florida, Gabe Gross hit a two-run homer, and Pat Burrell and B.J. Upton added solo shots for Tampa Bay in the win over Baltimore.

Gross gave Tampa Bay a 3-2 lead with his fourth-inning drive. Burrell and Upton homered in the sixth to make it 5-2.

Gross has only two homers in his past 33 games, while Upton hadn't gone over the fence since June.

Baltimore dropped to a season-worst 23 games under .500.



New York Yankees' Derek Jeter swings for an RBI single against the Oakland Athletics in the sixth inning of a baseball game Tuesday, Aug. 18, 2009, in Oakland, Calif. (

Associated Press

Royals 5, White Sox 4

In Chicago, Kansas City's Billy Butler doubled three times, had two RBIs and scored the go-ahead run to give Kansas City a tight win over Chicago.

In losing to last-place Kansas City for the seventh time this season, the White Sox fell three games behind Detroit in the AL Central. The Royals are

7-7 against the White Sox this season— and 40-65 against the rest of the major leagues.

In other AL games it was, L.A. Angels 5, Cleveland 4; Detroit 5, Seattle 3; Boston 10, Toronto 9; Tampa Bay 5, Baltimore 4; Minnesota 9, Texas 6; Kansas City 5, Chicago White Sox 4; and N.Y. Yankees 7, Oakland 2. □

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Philadelphia Phillies' Jamie Moyer pitches in the fifth inning of a baseball game against the Arizona Diamondbacks, Tuesday, Aug. 18, 2009, in Philadelphia. Philadelphia won 5-1.

Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Jamie Moyer pitched six scoreless innings in relief of Pedro Martinez, who took his spot in the starting rotation, as the Philadelphia Phillies beat the Arizona Diamondbacks 5-1 in the National League on Tuesday.

A 66-minute rain delay ruined Martinez's home debut with the Phillies. The three-time Cy Young Award winner allowed one run in three innings in his second start since returning to the majors. He struck out three and retired the last eight batters he faced, but left after the long delay.

Pitching in a steady rain, Moyer (11-9) gave up two singles and struck out five in his first relief appearance in five years. He chipped in with two hits.

Jayson Werth hit his career-best 25th homer and Carlos

NL Roundup

Moyer tosses six scoreless in relief of Pedro

Ruiz also connected, helping the NL East-leading Phillies win for the sixth time in seven games.

Dodgers 7, Cardinals 3

At Los Angeles, Chad Billingsley allowed three hits over six innings and added an RBI single and Los Angeles snapped St. Louis' five-game winning streak in a meeting of first-place clubs.

Andre Ethier went 3 for 4 with a triple and a late run-scoring double for the Dodgers, who improved the NL's best record to 71-49 with their fourth win in 11 games.

Billingsley (12-6) who missed his previous scheduled start after straining his left hamstring Aug. 7, has yielded three earned runs and nine hits in his last three starts.

Manny Ramirez and James Loney had run-scoring singles as seven Dodgers drove in one run apiece in a 14-hit attack. Brendan Ryan and Khalil Greene drove in runs for the Cardinals, who have lost twice in 11 games and remained six games in front of Chicago in the NL Central.

Padres 6, Cubs 3

At San Diego, rookie Kyle Blanks hit a two-run inside the park homer, and rookie Cesar Carrillo earned his first major league victory as San Diego downed Chicago.

Blanks, who hit a three-run homer in the bottom of the ninth in Monday's 4-1 win over the Cubs, hit a ball off

the top of the wall in center in the eighth that ricocheted to right-center. The 6-foot-6, 285-pound Blanks easily beat the throw home with a headfirst slide for his eighth homer.

Chicago lost for the ninth time in 12 games.

Adrian Gonzalez hit his 33rd homer off Ryan Dempster (6-7) in the fifth to put the Padres ahead to stay.

At Houston, Ricky Nolasco struck out 10 in his second complete game of the season as Florida had 10 hits for the 14th consecutive game.

Dan Uggla, Jorge Cantu and Jeremy Hermida hit solo homers for the Marlins, who have won nine of 11.

Florida's streak of 10-hit games is the longest since

the 1937 St. Louis Browns reached that figure in 15 straight, according to the Elias Sports Bureau.

Nolasco (9-8) retired 23 in a row after Carlos Lee's two-run homer in the first inning. He threw 115 pitches for the Marlins' fifth complete game.

The Astros lost for the sixth time in eight games after trading catcher Ivan Rodriguez to Texas earlier in the day.

At New York, Gary Sheffield doubled twice in an eight-run fourth inning as New York battered Atlanta's Derek Lowe.

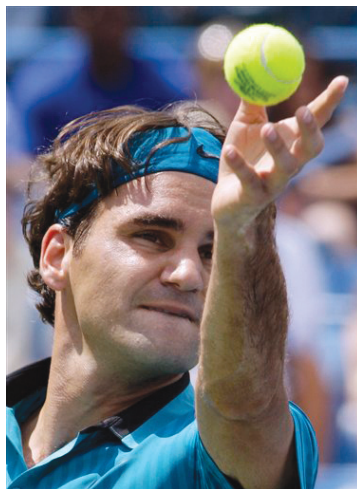
Luis Castillo had two hits and two RBIs during the big outburst off Lowe (12-8), who squandered a 4-0 lead against New York's injury-depleted lineup. The Mets pounded out

10 hits in the fourth, setting a franchise record for one inning.

Oliver Perez (3-3) won for the first time in seven starts since July 8. He gave up a three-run homer to Matt Diaz and a solo shot to Adam LaRoche, but walked only one in five innings.

The Mets had 17 hits without a home run. Sheffield, Castillo and Jeff Francoeur each had three.

In other NL games it was, Philadelphia 5, Arizona 1; Colorado 4, Washington 3; Pittsburgh 5, Milwaukee 2; N.Y. Mets 9, Atlanta 4; San Francisco 8, Cincinnati 5, 10 innings; Florida 6, Houston 2; San Diego 6, Chicago Cubs 3; and L.A. Dodgers 7, St. Louis 3. □



Roger Federer, from Switzerland, serves against Jose Acasuso, from Argentina, during the Cincinnati Open tennis tournament, Wednesday, Aug. 19, 2009, in Mason, Ohio.

Associated Press

Federer's serve solid in first Cincy match

JOE KAY

AP Sports Writer

MASON, Ohio (AP) — Roger Federer held serve throughout a 6-3, 7-5 win over Jose Acasuso in the second round of the Western and Southern Financial Group Masters on Wednesday, facing only one break point in his opener.

The Swiss star made 70 percent of his first serves and piled up 14 aces while getting accustomed to the tournament's heat, humidity and famously fast courts.

"The transition to Cincy is always a difficult one," Federer said. "I've had very up and down results here. But it just showed sort of how hard it is to get used to these kind of courts. We don't usually play on these fast courts, you know. That's why I'm happy with today's match."

Parts of his game were a little slow, but his accurate serve pushed the speed limit and carried him through a star-packed day. His match was the second of four in a row on center court involving top-ranked players — Federer, No. 2 Andy Murray, No. 3 Rafael Nadal and No. 4 Novak Djokovic.

In the evening? No. 5 Andy Roddick.

Djokovic, Federer, Murray and Nadal each won two-set matches to get the show going.

"That's the sort of thing I would love if I were a tennis fan," Federer said. "Just keep the same seat, you know. They come rolling in. It's like going to the movie theaters and seeing five, six great movies."

Federer is the No. 1 feature.

After winning his record 15th Grand Slam at Wimbledon, he took time off to become the father of twin girls. He got back on court last week in Montreal and reached the quarterfinals. He's trying to get his game in shape to defend his U.S. Open title in two weeks.

Murray won his first match as the world's No. 2 player, a ranking he reached for the first time after winning the Montreal title last week. Rather than fly to Cincinnati, he decided to make a 13-hour drive for the fun of it. □

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Zelaya niega amenazas de muerte a mandatario de facto en Honduras

LIMA (Reuters) - El depuesto presidente de Honduras, Manuel Zelaya, dijo el miércoles que la acusación del mandatario interino, Roberto Micheletti, de que recibió amenazas de muerte contra él y su familia son parte de los “fantasmas” que lo llevaron a tomar el poder. Micheletti, sentado en la silla presidencial desde que militares sacaron a Zelaya a punta de fusil de su casa y lo trasladaron a Costa Rica hace casi dos meses, dijo el lunes que debió estrechar su seguridad tras ser amenazado de muerte, sugiriendo que provinieron de partidarios de Zelaya. “Los supuestos del señor Micheletti creo que circulan más bien en sus fantasmas que lo han llevado a cometer este error contra los hondureños”, afirmó a periodistas Zelaya al ser consultado sobre los comentarios de Micheletti. “Los que están con los rifles, con la fuerza de las armas, son los golpistas que él encabeza”, agregó en el Palacio de Gobierno de Lima, donde se reunió por cerca de una hora con el presidente peruano, Alan García. Al denunciar las amenazas, el mandatario interino no precisó su procedencia ni los medios por los que fueron re-

alizadas, pero sugirió que provinieron de simpatizantes de Zelaya.

El derrocado mandatario realiza un periplo por Latinoamérica -en el que visitó recientemente Chile, Brasil y México- para que los líderes de la región mantengan su rechazo al Gobierno de facto y rechacen la legitimidad de una eventual elección.

Por otro lado, Zelaya aseguró que el retorno a su país es “inminente” porque no puede vivir “desterrado”, aunque reiteró que desea hacerlo en forma pacífica.

A pesar de que el golpe de Estado ha sido condenado por la comunidad internacional, el Gobierno interino no ha cedido en su posición de avalar la legalidad de la salida de Zelaya y cuenta con el apoyo de empresarios, la Iglesia y varios grupos políticos.

Las negociaciones que buscan una salida a la crisis política están estancadas, mientras que el Gobierno interino rechaza que el secretario general de la OEA, José Miguel Insulza, forme parte de una misión mediadora que busca reflotar el Acuerdo de San José propuesto por el presidente costarricense, Oscar Arias. □



Un partidario del depuesto presidente de Honduras, Manuel Zelaya, participa en una manifestación en Tegucigalpa, 18 ago 2009. El depuesto presidente de Honduras, Manuel Zelaya, dijo el miércoles que la acusación del mandatario interino, Roberto Micheletti, de que recibió amenazas de muerte contra él y su familia son parte de los ‘fantasmas’ que lo llevaron a tomar el poder. REUTERS/Edgard Garrido

Según embajador de EEUU en Colombia, William Brownfield

Militares EEUU ya visitan bases colombianas

BOGOTÁ (AP) - El embajador de Estados Unidos en Colombia, William Brownfield, afirmó el miércoles que con excepción de una base aérea, militares estadounidenses ya colaboran y visitan seis instalaciones castrenses colombianas que forman parte de un nuevo convenio de cooperación con Bogotá.

El diplomático, en una entrevista con la radio La FM, dijo además que ha habido “muchísima confusión” sobre el contenido del acuerdo que su gobierno discute con el del presidente Álvaro Uribe, por lo cual ambos países podrían decidir, tras su aprobación definitiva, darlo a conocer a toda la región y así reducir las preocupaciones que han surgido entre algunos países.

El convenio de cooperación para el uso de siete bases colombianas, que comenzó a discutirse en febrero, dijo el diplomático, incluye tres instalaciones aéreas, dos del ejército y dos de la armada, en las “que ya estamos colaborando” y que con excepción de la base aérea de Palanquero, a unos 100 kilómetros al noroeste de Bogotá, en el resto ya hay “visitas” y colaboración con militares estadounidenses.

“Tengo que confesar que con la excepción

quizá de Palanquero, en este momento hay colaboración que ya existe en las otras bases y en ese sentido no vamos a ver absolutamente nada diferente” con el nuevo convenio, dijo el embajador.

Y al ser consultado sobre qué era entonces lo nuevo del acuerdo, el embajador dijo que entre los aspectos que se modernizaban o actualizaban de otros convenios con Colombia que databan de los años, 50, 60 y 70, era que precisamente se mencionara específicamente esas instalaciones, entre otros aspectos que no detalló.

Brownfield dijo también que hasta donde sabe no se ha producido ninguna invitación formal a su gobierno para participar el 28 de agosto en Argentina en una cumbre presidencial extraordinaria de la Unión de Naciones Suramericanas (Unasur) para discutir el tema del convenio sobre el uso de las bases.

Indicó que actualmente hay en Colombia unos 250 militares, la mayoría en labores administrativas en la embajada y que ese número se reduciría en los próximos años porque en Washington “el congreso está bajando los fondos para el apoyo militar” a esta nación andina. □

Brasil:

Ex ministra deja oficialismo

BRASILIA (AP) - La senadora Marina Silva, ex ministra del Medio Ambiente y reconocida defensora de la Amazonia, anunció el miércoles su salida del gobernante Partido de los Trabajadores (PT) y dejó abierta la posibilidad de una candidatura presidencial. Silva, de 51 años, dijo que analizaría su incorporación al Partido Verde (PV), que a principios de este mes la invitó a ser parte de la agrupación como aspirante presidencial en las elecciones de octubre de 2010.

“Fue difícil decidir salir del Partido de los Trabajadores después de una militancia de 30 años”, declaró Silva en conferencia de prensa. La ex ministra es una de las fundadoras del partido en el gobierno.

Dijo que con su salida del PT “me siento más libre para hacer la transición dentro del PV”, lo cual implica la negociación de una agenda de desarrollo sustentable para Brasil. La salida de la ministra, reconocida internacionalmente por su activismo ambiental, es un golpe político para el partido del presidente Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva en momentos que acumula fuerzas de cara a las elecciones presidenciales de 2010. □



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